Hafa Adai!

'Company must procure crane for Rota seaport or default on lease' PAGE 3

Apatang donates 10K to Saipan Cares for Animals. PAGE 4

$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXII, Issue No. 54

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IPI appeal vs CCC decision dismissed

AT A GLANCE

As of 5:34pm, March 16, 2022

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population Additional Dose Vaccinated: **58.4%**

Days since last community transmission: **2**

Pfizer/BioNTech	
Initiated:	38,017
Fully Vaccinated:	37,233
Moderna	
Initiated:	5,346
Fully Vaccinated:	5,208
Janssen	
Fully vaccinated:	1,149
Additional Dose:	21,776

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	46,528	65	46,593
Recovered	44,280	915	45,195
Active	994	65	1,059
Deaths	339	0	339

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	10,472	63	10,535
Recovered	10,248	42	10,290
Active	151	63	214
Deaths	31	0	31

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has affirmed the CNMI Commonwealth Casino Commission's order suspending Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's exclusive casino license and, by doing so, dismissed the casino investor's appeal.

According to the order issued by Superior Court Associate Judge Wesley Bogdan yesterday, the court affirms the CCC's order suspending IPI's casino license and imposing penalties because the court finds no error in the commission's order under the Ad-

See IPI on Page 4

HOPWOOD STUDENT VOLUNTEERS GCEA

Hopwood Middle School's National Junior Honor Society and the HMS Student Council students helped rehabilitate and repaint the school's curbs last March 8 through the Governor's Council of Economic Adviser's Adopt-A-Median program.

Story on Page 2

Hofschneider rejects Santos' refusal to serve on impeachment committee

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Hofschneider

Citing the lack of reason or justification, Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Saipan) has rejected Sen. Teresita A. Santos' (Ind-Rota) refusal to be appointed a member of the Senate Special Committee on the Impeachment Hearing.

Santos

In his letter to Santos Tuesday, Hofschneider reminded the Rota senator that declining to accept her appointment without good reason is tantamount to neglect of duty, which may be sanctioned pursuant to Senate Rule 16.

The president said he received Santos' letter dated

See HOFSCHNEIDER on Page 4

Couple allegedly trafficked teen, mother from Guam to Hawaii

HONOLULU (AP)—A couple trafficked a 15-year-old girl and her mother from Guam to Hawaii, where they took away their passports, forced them to work and beat them, police alleged in court documents.

Kevin and Pomerrine Robert are charged with felony labor trafficking. The state public defender's office represented them during a court appearance Monday.

Pomerrine Robert took the passports away when the girl and her mother arrived in Ho-

See COUPLE on Page 4

COVID UPDATE:

63 new cases; 5 hospitalized

Sixty-three additional individuals have been confirmed positive for COVID-19, bringing the CNMI total to 10,535 cases since March 28, 2020.

See 63 on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS

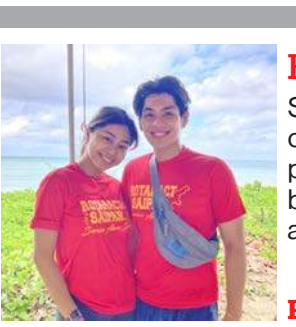
New Zealand is "ready to welcome the world back" with most tourists allowed to return by May.

Page 11

WORLD

Russia escalated its bombardment of Kyiv and launched new assaults on the city of Mariupol.

Page 13



ENVIRONMENT

Saturday was a chance for about 30 people to go to the beach to volunteer and pick up trash.

Page 14

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

TAGA plus sports business lifestyle

Check out the latest issue of Taga Plus
https://tagaplus.saipantribune.com/

Local

Hopwood Middle School's National Junior Honor Society and the HMS Student Council students helped rehabilitate and repaint the school's curbs last March 8 through the Governor's Council of Economic Adviser's Adopt-A-Median program. GCEA

Hopwood students rehabilitate school curbs

» Adopt-A-Median project improves safety and visibility for students

The Governor's Council of Economic Advisers announced yesterday the completion of another incredible community transformation by the Hopwood Middle School's National Junior Honor Society and the Student Council on March 8. The NJHS and STUCO members, with the supervision of Dr. Riya Nathrani and Esco Hocog Ulloa, rehabilitated and repainted the school's curbs through GCEA's Adopt-A-Median program to improve visibility and enhance safety on their campus.

Zack Camacho, an NJHS officer in the 8th grade, said the groups' involvement in the GCEA Marianas Village Pride Campaign improved the campus.

"I feel like this project that we worked on helped make the school more attractive and welcoming," Camacho said. "It is important to participate in projects like this so that student leaders can help make their school and community a better place to learn. It also helps students understand the importance of service in the community."

HMS' STUCO vice president Mary Evani Larioza found the project an enjoyable activity with fellow students.

"I found it fun. I got to paint with my partners and experience what it's like for people that do jobs like this. It's nice to participate in these types of projects because you get to help your school and experience something new," Larioza said.

Students were also asked how they can encourage other CNMI Public School System students and community members become involved.

Walter Josh Clave, STUCO president in the 6th grade, said it's important for students to participate in these activities to build motivation, creativity, and self-confidence.

James Mercader, NJHS president in the 8th grade, said, "I can persuade others by telling them how fun it was to work with other students and to build teamwork. Also, I can tell them about the importance of giving back to our community and completing projects like this that will benefit the students at Hopwood Middle School."

Princess Rigua, the STUCO president in the 7th grade, added, "It would be fun if prizes were offered for completing the project and also creating student video announcements to be shown to each school so they can be motivated to join this campaign!"

Nathrani said it was wonderful i to see the students come together and work on a community service project. "It helped them take pride and ownership of their school campus and village by working toward a common goal," Nathrani said. "We're fortunate to be back at our campus in Chalan Piao and the students wanted to take part in beautifying it. I hope to see more school and village beautification projects in the future. HMS will be going out again, this time, to paint the crosswalk in front of their facility."

GCEA thanks the HMS students and teachers for volunteering their time to give back to their community. As a result, all HMS students will enjoy a safer, more visible pick-up/drop-off experience. GCEA welcomes more schools to join the Adopt-A-Median program and take active roles in improving safety for students.

Before and after photos can be found on GCEA's Facebook page (@cnmieconomy). For more information about the Adopt-A-Median program and the Marianas Village Pride Campaign, visit the GCEA website at cnmieconomy.com or contact the council at gceacnmi@gmail.com. All GCEA Public Private Partnership projects are made possible by the support of the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan's public benefit fund with the Department of Public Lands. ***(PR)***

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
Finding a designated driver on St. Patrick's Day isn't luck. It's smart.
This St. Patrick's Day, please remember that Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving. If you plan to go out and enjoy the evening with alcohol, make sure you refrain from driving. Review these facts and share the word about the dangers of drunk driving so you can continue merry-making for all the St. Paddy's Days to come.
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The Marianas

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Marianas Visitors Authority hereby gives notice that a **Special Board of Directors Meeting** will be held on **March 18, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. at the MVA Conference Room, Saipan.**

MEETING AGENDA

1) **Preliminary Matters**
   a. Call to Order
   b. Roll Call
   c. Adoption of Agenda
2) **Public Comments**
3) **Old Business**
   a. MVA-RFP-22-2047: Marianas Visitors Authority Tourism Resumption Investment Plan – Airlines Incentive
   b. Memorandum of Agreement
      i. Carolinian Affairs Office – Refaluwasch Advisory Council
4) **New Business**
   a. Sole Source Contract – KSPN2 Flame Tree TV, Visitors Channel – Safety Tips Airtime
   b. CNMI TRIP- Korea
      i. Quarantine Facility
   c. MVA Rota Office Perimeter Fence
5) **Executive Session**
6) **Miscellaneous/Announcements**
7) **Adjournment**

/s/ Viola Alepuyo
Chairperson, MVA Board of Directors

‘Company must procure crane for Rota seaport or default on lease’

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The company that has the exclusive right to conduct terminal and stevedoring services at the Rota West Harbor must procure a port crane or face default of its lease agreement with the Commonwealth Ports Authority, according to CPA executive director Christopher S. Tenorio.

Tenorio

He told Sen. Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota) last Tuesday that CPA agrees that a functional crane at Rota West Harbor is necessary and that they have already informed RTT about this requirement.

RTT has held exclusive right to provide stevedoring services at the Rota West Harbor since 1996.

Tenorio said that under the lease, RTT is responsible for purchasing any and all equipment that CPA deems necessary for the smooth and efficient operation at the port.

Tenorio discussed the RTT-CPA lease in his response to Manglona’s letter to him Monday in which the senator disclosed that cargo ship M/V *Mariana* carrying essential commodities arrived last Feb. 24 at the Rota seaport but failed to offload the items from the containers and had to return to Saipan due to lack of a crane at the port.

Manglona said it’s not the first time that such an incident affected the island’s port operations.

The senator said with the millions of dollars being invested in the CNMI by the federal government, now is the time to seek financial assistance in procuring a port crane to ensure the smooth operation of the Rota seaport.

Tenorio said CPA has already taken steps to improve the movement of containers—both interisland and between itself and the Port of Guam—through its pursuit of the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Marine Highway Program.

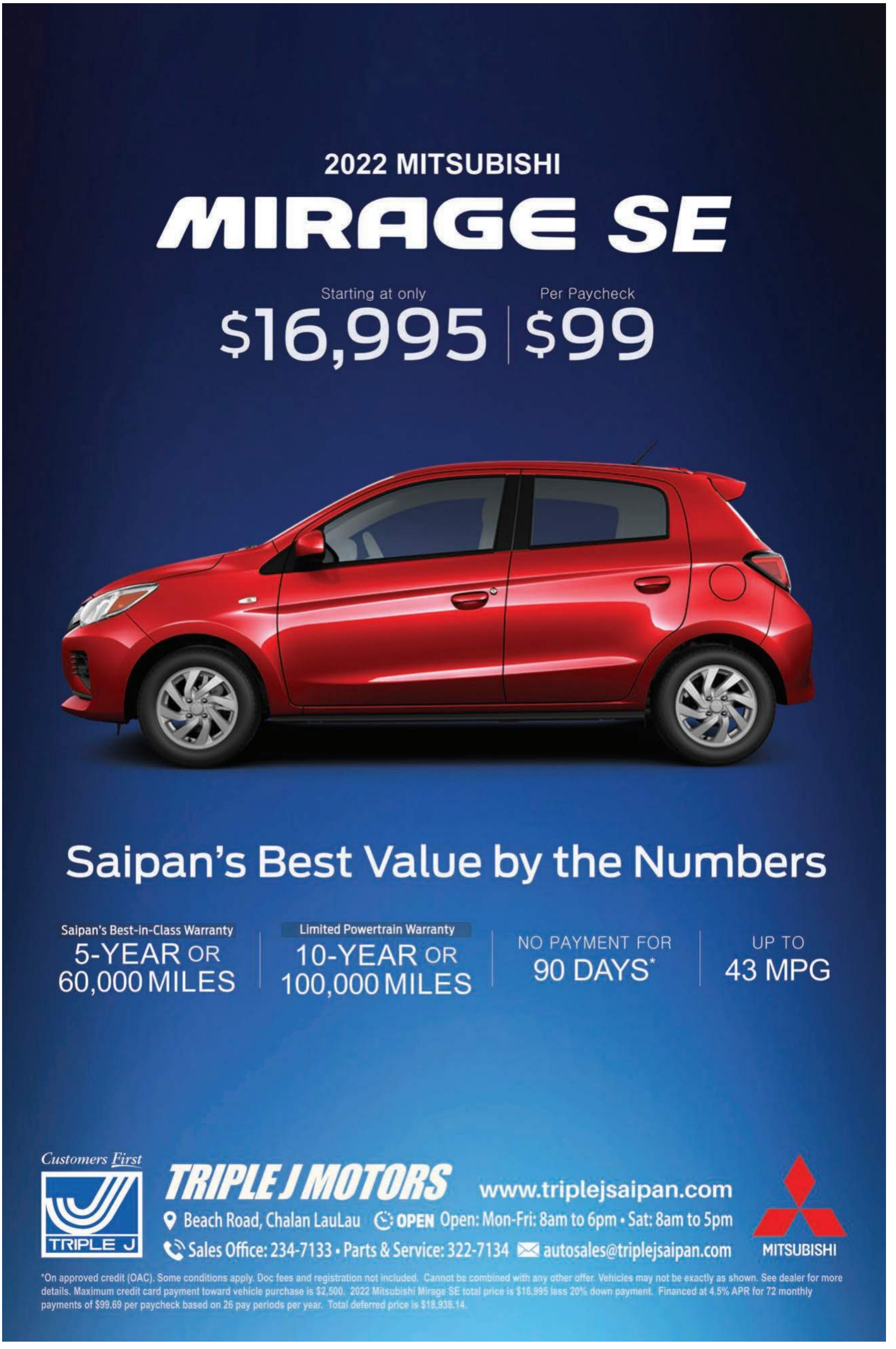
He said that in late 2021, the U.S. DOT’s Maritime Administration approved a new route destination between Guam and the CNMI. He said this route destination allows for the expansion of existing containerized freight by making projects along this route eligible for grant funding.

He said one of those projects that CPA has already sought and has had approved is the “CNMI Freight and Improvement Project.”

“This project will expand CPA’s maritime capacities for the shipping of interisland cargo and commodities and will increase the frequency of such freight and reduce shipping costs,” Tenorio said.

Saying he admires Manglona’s passion in resolving critical issues at Rota seaport, Tenorio asked the senator to use his “influence and pass legisla-

See COMPANY on Page 4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Apatang donates 10K to Saipan Cares for Animals

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang handed over a check for $10,000 yesterday afternoon to Beth Pliscou, director of Saipan Cares for Animals, that will be used to build SCA's new animal shelter in As Lito.

Apatang turned over the check to Pliscou soon after a tour of the Saipan Mayor's Office's new dog shelter in Afetna. It was learned that the money was sourced from the American Rescue Plan Act funds.

Pliscou said they will start clearing and preparing the new site where SCA will relocate in As Lito on April 1 and the Saipan Mayor's Office and Federal Emergency Management Agency will be helping them do that.

Pliscou said that FEMA and the mayor's office are "ready to lift and clear the debris and old roofs [from the As Lito site] that probably go as far back as Typhoon Soudelor," she added.

Most of SCA's animals are currently housed at their animal shelter in As Gonno and the mayor's office and SCA will work to relocate some dogs temporarily to the new animal shelter in Afetna, while building the new shelter in As Lito is in the works. By April 15, SCA hopes to relocate at least 40 dogs to Afetna as the temporary shelter is able to hold 40 dogs at a time. At this moment, the shelter in As Gonno is currently home of 68 dogs, which Pliscou is hoping the community will foster or adopt.

The Commonwealth Zoning Board has given SCA until April 30, 2022, to vacate the As Gonno property, resulting in SCA moving the animal shelter to As Lito and taking up a clinic on Middle Road.

According to Pliscou over the phone, the "$10,000 is a huge help." When asked if additional funds and donations is welcome, she said SCA would be grateful for more help toward the building of the new shelter.

Additionally, a GoFundMe page for SCA that was created on Jan. 21 is still open for donations and has raised $4,865.00 thus far. A link to the GoFundMe can be found at https://gofund.me/0541868b.

SCA's new clinic and shelter is open to the public at their new location on Middle Road. According to their Facebook page, Bravecto flea medicine is available, along with cat and dog vaccines.

LEIGH GASES

Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang, center, presents a $10,000 check to Beth Pliscou, director of Saipan Cares for Animals, right. They are joined by SCA vice president Yumiko Brundridge at the new dog shelter in Afetna.

63

From Page 1

Of the 63 cases identified on March 14, 2022, four were identified on Tinian. The vaccination statuses of the 63 cases are pending verification.

As of March 15, 2022, there were five individuals hospitalized as a result of COVID-19. Three are unvaccinated, while two are fully vaccinated.

Of the 10,535 total cases that have been identified in the CNMI so far, there have been 10,290 recoveries; 214 active cases; and 31 COVID-19-related deaths .

A total of 9,801 were identified via community testing and 734 via travel testing.

A total of 24 COVID-19 vaccine shots were administered on March 15, 2022; of the eligible population, 58.4% have already received an additional dose. The vaccination rate is calculated using the 2020 Census population estimates for the CNMI and includes the eligible 5-years-old and older population.

A total of 291 COVID-19 tests were conducted on March 14, 2022: 239 via Community-Based Testing; 22 at the Koblerville COVID-19 Community Center; 16 at the Tinian Health Center; and 14 at the Rota Health Center. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

COMPANY

From Page 3

tion" that will aid CPA in its undertakings. The executive director urged the senator to follow-up not only on CPA's already-taken proactive steps to address this issue, but also on other government entities within his sphere of influence, such as the Rota Mayor's Office and its 2019 U.S. of Insular Affairs Maintenance Assistance Program grant award.

COUPLE

From Page 1

nolulu from Guam in August and told them she would return the passports if they paid her money, according to probable cause documents filed in court. The documents didn't specify the country of the passports.

They lived in the couple's apartment, while the girl enrolled at a high school and the mother got a job at a deli where Robert also worked, the documents said.

The documents said Robert took away the mother's pay and spent the money on things such as rent, cigarettes and crystal methamphetamine.

The girl "was expected to regularly clean the entire apartment, including sweeping, mopping and laundry," the documents said.

The documents described beatings, including one on Feb. 22 when the girl left to visit a friend. Robert found her, grabbed her by the hair, dragged her through the housing complex and told her to smoke crystal meth. When she refused, Kevin Robert allegedly held her down while Pomerrine Robert punched her in the face.

After another beating with a metal curtain rod a few days later, the girl was locked in a bedroom and not allowed to go to school, the documents said. The couple gave her bottled water, chips and a bucket to use as a toilet, the documents said.

She was kept there until March 4 and then went to school and reported it to a counselor, the documents said.

The girl's mother was afraid to intervene because Pomerrine Robert also hit her, the documents said.

Public Defender James Tabe said Tuesday his office will continue to represent Pomerrine Robert, but it's unclear who will represent Kevin Robert. Tabe declined to comment on the allegations.

According to court records, Kevin Robert requested a Chuukese interpreter.

IPI

From Page 1

ministrative Procedures Act's "arbitrary and capricious" standard of review.

The judge explained that the APA's standard of review states that agency actions that are "arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, or otherwise not in accordance with law" should be set aside. But because the CCC's order was based on relevant facts and evidence generated during the evidentiary hearings; and because IPI admitted to these facts and offered no defense other than *force majeure*, the court found there had been no error of judgment with regards to the suspension of IPI's exclusive casino license, Bogdan said.

The judge also addressed IPI's main argument, which is that the CCC's suspension of its casino license failed to recognize and apply the doctrine of *force majeure* before issuing its order despite the presence of a *force majeure* provision in the casino license agreement.

Force majeure is defined as an unforeseeable circumstance that hinders a party from fulfilling its part in a contract. The *force majeure* event IPI is arguing in this case is the COVID-19 pandemic that it claims hindered it from complying with the casino license agreement.

Bogdan said IPI's argument that the *force majeure* defense should be interpreted by the court to excuse all of its violations of the terms and conditions of its exclusive casino license and that the court should set aside the CCC's order in its entirety is "not at all well-taken."

"Ultimately, the Casino Commission's decision with respect to these violations is not connected to the *force majeure* defense [IPI] raised before the Casino Commission. Therefore, in short, the Casino Commission's decision was not arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion or, not in accordance with law," Bogdan said.

IPI had also argued that the Casino Commission had relied on materials within the "Annual Report" issued by IPI's Hong Kong-based parent company, Imperial Pacific International Holdings Ltd., that were not admitted into the evidentiary record when the CCC made its decision, reportedly depriving the casino investor of the opportunity to challenge, examine, or rebut under due process considerations the casino commission's conclusions drawn from that evidence.

Here, Bogdan said, the assertion that IPI did not have notice of the grounds for the suspension of its exclusive casino license or an opportunity to respond is "simply not true."

"Upon review of the entire record, during the actual hearing on April 22, 2021, wherein the Annual Report was mentioned, two IPI representatives were present answering the legitimate questions raised by the Casino Commission prior to taking a vote on the matter. Moreover, IPI had been represented by legal counsel, by its own admission the court notes, through all stages of the enforcement actions," Bogdan said.

HOFSCHNEIDER

From Page 1

Monday. In it, Santos thanked Hofschneider for giving her the opportunity to serve as a member of the committee but that she "respectfully declines" the appointment. She did not state a reason or justification for her refusal.

In rejecting Santos' letter declining the appointment, Hofschneider noted that Article 2, Section 8 of the CNMI Constitution assigns the Senate with the profound responsibility to act as a court trying an impeached official.

"It is a daunting duty but the Senate's duty nonetheless," Hofschneider said.

The president created the impeachment hearing committee last Thursday and appointed its members, with Sen. Karl R. King-Nabors (R-Tinian) as chairman, Sen. Justo S. Quitugua (R-Saipan) as vice chairman, and Sens. Santos, Francisco Q. Cruz (R-Tinian), and Victor B. Hocog (R-Rota) as members.

He pointed out that, as a member of the Senate, Santos has an obligation and duty to participate in the impeachment proceedings if appointed to do so pursuant to Senate Rule 7, Section 2.

Hofschneider said that that specific rule states that "all committees of the Senate shall be subject to the orders of the president and shall faithfully carry out such orders."

He said Santos' appointment to the Special Committee is not voluntary or an option but an order, assignment, and an undertaking to participate.

The president said Senate Rule 16 states that an affirmative vote of not less than five members of the Senate may act on a charge or charges of misconduct, disorderly behavior, or neglect of duty on a member or members of the Senate proscribed under these Rules, Commonwealth or federal laws."

Hofschneider said Santos' cooperation and participation in the special committee is necessary to move forward with the impeachment proceedings. He urged the senator to accept her appointment and duty.

House Resolution 22-14, which was introduced by Rep. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan), impeached Torres for alleged commission of felonies, corruption, and neglect of duty. Torres, who is the titular head of the NMI Republican Party, is seeking re-election this Nov. 8.

Importance of water safety equipment

NEW LIFE JACKET LABEL
ADULT UNIVERSAL
User Weight: >40 kg (>88 lbs)
Chest Size: 76-132 cm (30-52 in.)
PERFORMANCE LEVEL
70
TURN ABILITY (SEE BELOW)
WARNINGS (SEE BELOW)
Measured in newtons.
• Lower level number offers more mobility, comfort, and style with good flotation, and intended for near shore (calm water) activities.
• Higher level number offers greater flotation, turning, and stability in the water, and for offshore activities (greater time to rescue).
• There are areas where you may be boating near shore when rescue is hours away, and a higher level is needed.
• Be honest about your swimming ability. Poor swimmers may need a higher level to stay upright and easily tread water.
50
70
100
150
NEAR SHORE (CALM)
OFFSHORE (WAVES)
INCREASING TIME TO RESCUE
WARNINGS
Some life jackets are NOT APPROVED for:
Water skiing
Tubing
Personal watercraft or wakeboarding
White water paddling
TURN ABILITY
Life jacket will turn an unconscious wearer face up—test before use.
Life jacket will not turn an unconscious wearer face up.
USCG Approved 160.064/XXXX/X
TC Approved XXXXXXX-X
ANSI/CAN/UL 12402-5
USCG APPROVED
Model: XXXX Style: XXXX
Lot No. XXXX
Approval conditions state that this device must be worn to be counted as equipment required by vessels meeting Transport Canada or USCG regulations.
APPROVED USE IN U.S. AND CANADA

SANTA RITA, Guam—The Coast Guard would like to remind the public of the importance of proper water safety equipment when taking part in water-related activities, particularly life jackets.

The 2020 Recreational Boating Statics Report revealed there were 767 boating fatalities nationwide for 2020. In events where the cause of death is known, approximately 86% of people were not wearing life jackets.

"It's crucial for boaters to wear a life jacket at all times because it very likely will save your life if you enter the water unexpectedly," said Capt. Scott Johnson, chief of the Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety at Coast Guard headquarters. "The Coast Guard reminds boaters to make sure that life jackets are serviceable, properly sized, and correctly fastened."

The Coast Guard reminds the community that it is critical to ensure that your life jacket or Personal Floatation Device is Coast Guard-approved if utilizing recreational watercraft. A properly certified Coast Guard-approved life jacket has passed numerous testing requirements to ensure it will offer the wearer the level of safety it is designed for.

There are many options for purchasing life jackets via local or online retailers, but not all life jackets are Coast Guard-approved even if the manufacturer claims it to be. You can identify if your life jacket is Coast Guard-approved by simply checking the printed label, often found inside of the jacket backing or side panel. The label should say "USCG Approved" along with serial numbers.

Other water safety equipment like a safety whistle, electronic strobe light, emergency pyrotechnic flares, and a Personal Locating Beacon are proven lifesaving devices and could be a tremendous help in assisting first responders locating missing persons, especially at night.

"When you combine additional lifesaving equipment, this greatly enhances the chances of rescue should an emergency arise," said Lt. j.g. Edward Oingerang, public affairs officer, Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam.

If you are unsure if your life jacket or other water safety equipment is sufficient, or if you need general education in water safety, email Guam's local Coast Guard Auxiliary Vessel Examiners at CGAuxHR@Gmail.com for assistance. ***(USCG)***

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT,
JC Tenorio Enterprises, Inc.

Analyze and evaluate company finances, accounting methods, and the impact of business changes to prepare financial reports, perform audits, and conduct budgeting and financial analysis. Ensure that the organization's internal control is accurate, efficient, and effective and that company complies with all federal and local tax requirements. Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and 18-months experience as an Accountant.

Send resume to: J.C. Tenorio Enterprises, Inc., Attn: Human Resources, P.O. Box 500137, Saipan, MP 96950

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topped with signature cream cheese frosting
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SUPERIOR COURT

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS, U.S.A.
Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of Justice
P.O. BOX 500307, SAIPAN, MP 96950-0307
670-236-9783 Telephone | 670-236-9743 Fax
Patrick.diaz@nmijudiciary.com

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Pursuant to Supreme Court COVID Order No. 16 (2021-ADM-0019-MSC) and Supreme Court Order regarding the Temporary Closure of the Guma' Hustisia (2021-ADM-0021-MSC and 2021-ADM-0026-MSC), the following traffic cases were continued to March 31, 2022:

Case Caption	Case Number	Citation No.	Case Caption	Case Number	Citation No.
CNMI vs. A.G.C.	21-01883-TR	2801	CNMI vs. A.G.C.	21-01883-TR	2801
CNMI vs. S.U.T.	20-00900-TR	117091	CNMI vs. S.U.T.	20-00900-TR	117091
CNMI vs. S.U.T.	20-00512-TR	118551	CNMI vs. S.U.T.	20-00512-TR	118551
CNMI vs. S.U.T.	20-01255-TR	109835	CNMI vs. S.U.T.	20-01255-TR	109835
CNMI vs. S.U.Y.	20-02390-TR	121100	CNMI vs. S.U.Y.	20-02390-TR	121100
CNMI vs. R.C.	21-02374-TR	2144	CNMI vs. R.C.	21-02374-TR	2144
CNMI vs.. B.S.	21-02387-TR	1721	CNMI vs.. B.S.	21-02387-TR	1721
CNMI vs. C.A.C.S.	21-02416-TR	1479	CNMI vs. C.A.C.S.	21-02416-TR	1479
CNMI vs. F.H.	21-02497-TR	2820	CNMI vs. F.H.	21-02497-TR	2820
CNMI vs. L.P.H.	21-02539-TR	3139	CNMI vs. L.P.H.	21-02539-TR	3139
CNMI vs. J.P.S.	21-02551-TR	1105	CNMI vs. J.P.S.	21-02551-TR	1105
CNMI vs. H.S.	21-02569-TR	3144	CNMI vs. H.S.	21-02569-TR	3144
CNMI vs. H.G.Y.	21-02571-TR	3156	CNMI vs. H.G.Y.	21-02571-TR	3156
CNMI vs. K.M.R.D.	21-02574-TR	2829	CNMI vs. K.M.R.D.	21-02574-TR	2829
CNMI vs. L.H.	21-02652-TR	3581	CNMI vs. L.H.	21-02652-TR	3581
CNMI C.A.	21-02704-TR	109407	CNMI C.A.	21-02704-TR	109407
CNMI vs. C.S.W.	21-02707-TR	109409	CNMI vs. C.S.W.	21-02707-TR	109409
CNMI vs. Y.K.M.	21-02709-TR	4104	CNMI vs. Y.K.M.	21-02709-TR	4104
CNMI vs. J.F.L.	21-02718-TR	4151	CNMI vs. J.F.L.	21-02718-TR	4151
CNMI vs. B.D.	21-02726-TR	4181	CNMI vs. B.D.	21-02726-TR	4181
CNMI vs. K.A.C.	21-02736-TR	3325	CNMI vs. K.A.C.	21-02736-TR	3325
CNMI vs. N.I.M.	21-02746-TR	4279	CNMI vs. N.I.M.	21-02746-TR	4279
CNMI vs. J.Y.	21-02747-TR	4277	CNMI vs. J.Y.	21-02747-TR	4277
CNMI vs. J.Z.	21-02748-TR	4301	CNMI vs. J.Z.	21-02748-TR	4301
CNMI vs. V.T.	21-02762-TR	2926	CNMI vs. V.T.	21-02762-TR	2926
CNMI vs. K.I.E.	21-02766-TR	2637	CNMI vs. K.I.E.	21-02766-TR	2637
CNMI vs. L.W.	21-02788-TR	1214	CNMI vs. L.W.	21-02788-TR	1214
CNMI vs. J.S.P.	21-02801-TR	1217	CNMI vs. J.S.P.	21-02801-TR	1217
CNMI vs. Y.Z.	21-02807-TR	3279	CNMI vs. Y.Z.	21-02807-TR	3279
CNMI vs. G.G.L.	21-02816-TR	4116	CNMI vs. G.G.L.	21-02816-TR	4116
CNMI vs. E.F.A.	21-02823-TR	2474	CNMI vs. E.F.A.	21-02823-TR	2474
CNMI vs. M.M.	21-02834-TR	3576	CNMI vs. M.M.	21-02834-TR	3576
CNMI vs. C.C.C.	21-02837-TR	3580	CNMI vs. C.C.C.	21-02837-TR	3580
CNMI vs. R.P.	21-02847-TR	4197	CNMI vs. R.P.	21-02847-TR	4197

If your initials or citations are listed, you must appear at the Guma' Hustisia on March 31, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. Alternatively, you have the option of paying off your ticket at the Cashier's Office located on the first floor of the Guma' Hustisia by March 31, 2022. If you pay off your ticket, you will not be required to come to court.

Should you need any assistance, please call 670-236-9700 or email the Clerk of Court Patrick Diaz at patrick.diaz@nmijudiciary.com.

Apprenticeship program extended for another year

Benavente

U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration has approved for another year the CNMI Apprenticeship State Expansion Program. The no-cost extension, which was approved on Feb. 18, 2022, was awarded for performance until June 30, 2023. Initially, the grant awarded to the CNMI Department of Labor-Workforce Investment Agency Division would have ended on June 30 of this year.

The CNMI ASE Program's main focus is to provide the business community opportunities to grow and expand through an industry-driven, high-quality career pathway where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce. Employers are the foundation of every apprenticeship program and are responsible for creating opportunities for current employees to advance their skills and knowledge in any given occupation through on-the-job learning and related technical instruction. The end result of each program offers apprentices a nationally recognized credential from the U.S. Department of Labor. A registered apprenticeship program will mean that employers are able to tell prospective employees, customers, and suppliers that they believe in their employees and that they are their most important asset.

"With the extension award, the CNMI Apprenticeship State Expansion Program will help many businesses create a pipeline of skilled workers for the future," said Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente. "The CNMI ASE Program will play a key role in many businesses, especially those who are reliant on CW-1 workers. Many businesses are looking for ways to sustain their local workforce. The apprenticeship program will be able to help employers train their employees to increase their skills and knowledge to fill the gaps left behind by CW-1 workers."

The original ASE Program grant was awarded on June 25, 2019. The apprenticeship program, however, faced many challenges from the aftermath of Super Typhoon Yutu and the effects of the current pandemic. The CNMI Department of Labor is looking forward to working with all interested employers to help them with their workforce needs. For more information, contact the WIOA office at (670) 664-1712 or email apprenticeship@dol.gov.mp. ***(PR)***

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the Open Government Act (1 CMC §9901 et seq), the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation ("CUC") Board of Directors hereby informs the general public that the Board will hold its regular board meeting on **Tuesday, March 22, 2022, and Wednesday, March 23, 2022 at 10:30 a.m.** The meeting will be held at the CUC Conference Room 17, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building. The following agenda will be considered and public attendance is welcome.

AGENDA*

I. Preliminary Matters
  A. Call to Order
  B. Roll Call
  C. Adoption of Agenda
  D. Adoption of Minutes
    1. January 12, 2022 Regular Board Meeting
    2. February 25, 2022 Regular Board Meeting
  E. Correspondence

II. Management Reports
  A. Executive Director's Report
  B. Chief Financial Officer's Report

III. Committee Reports
  A. Personnel Committee
  B. Operations Committee

IV. Old Business
  A. Update on Power Plant, DE5 and DE7
  B. Update on Payment Kiosks
  C. Update on 5% Employees' Performance Base Increase
  D. Update on Telesource - Wartsila Engines/Contract
  E. Update on CHCC
  F. Update on In-House Legal Counsel
  G. Update on 8-Hour Annual Leave for Hard to Fill Positions

V. New Business
  1. FY 23 Budget Review/Approval
  2. Solar Farm in Rota

VI. Public Comments**
VII. Executive Session***
VIII. Announcements
IX. Adjournment

_____/s/_____
MIRANDA V. MANGLONA, Chairwoman

** In accordance with Public Law 8-41, additional agenda items may be added to the above listing only by a recorded vote of the majority members of the governing body.*
*** All interested persons are welcome to attend, and submit written and oral testimony on the above-agenda items. Public Comments are limited to 30 minutes and each remark is limited to three minutes.*
**** Pursuant to 1 CMC §9912, the CUC Board of Directors may vote to meet at any time in executive session, in consultation with the Legal Counsel on matters deemed privileged and confidential.*

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Juan Taitano] FCD-DI CIVIL
] ACTION NO.
] 22-0070
-vs-]
]
]
Li Taitano]
Respondent,]
_____]

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED RESPONDENT:
LI TAITANO

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the Court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 501698 Saipan, MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this Summons, Judgement by Default may be taken against you for relief in the Complaint.

Dated this 18th day of February, 2022.

/s/Clerk of Court

509th Bomb Wing AFB receives historical painting of *Enola Gay*

U.S. AIR FORCE/ SENIOR AIRMAN PARKER J. MCCAULEY

U.S. Air Force Col. Daniel Diehl, left, 509th Bomb Wing commander and U.S. Air Force Col. Kyle Wilson, 509th BW vice commander, stand for a photo next to a painting of the Enola Gay, a Silverplate B-29 Superfortress, Dec. 1, 2021, at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri. The painting depicts the Enola Gay as it was on Tinian in 1945 with the markings of the 6th Bombardment Group.

By PARKER J. MCCAULEY
509TH BOMB WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

WHITEMAN AIR FORCE BASE, Mo.—509th Bomb Wing leadership put The Peacemakers, a painting by John Shaw, on display on Dec. 1, 2021 at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri. A community partner originally donated the painting, which depicts the *Enola Gay* being prepared for the first atomic bombing mission, to the 6th Air Refueling Wing at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida before it was transferred to the 509th Bomb Wing. The *Enola Gay*, a Silverplate B-29 Superfortress, was formerly assigned to the 509th Composite Group.

The 6th ARW traces its lineage to the 6th Bombardment Group, which was assigned to Tinian at the same time as the 509th CG. Before being captured by American forces, Tinian was a colony of the Japanese Empire and it was suspected that the local population may have been transmitting intelligence about American forces on the island. The 509th CG wanted to draw attention away from itself and replaced their own distinctive markings with those of the other bomb groups. The *Enola Gay* was one of several aircraft to display the markings of the 6th BG including their circular "R" tail code.

In light of this shared history, the 6th ARW and the community partners who donated believed Whiteman A Air Force Base would be the best home for the painting.

Senate impeachment pre-hearing conference postponed to Monday

King-Nabors

Senate Special Committee on the Impeachment Hearing chair Sen. Karl R. King-Nabors (R-Tinian) postponed the committee's prehearing conference that was scheduled for yesterday.

King-Nabors notified committee members yesterday that the conference has been rescheduled to Monday, March 21, at 1:30pm, in the Senate chamber on Capital Hill.

King-Nabors did not indicate in the notice the reason for the rescheduling.

King-Nabors, however, told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that the committee wanted to make sure that there was no ambiguity as to what was expected at the pre-trial hearing.

"We wanted to make sure that notices were properly given to all parties," he said.

Among the topics of the prehearing conference is setting a date for the start of the impeachment hearings in the case against Gov. Ralph DLG Torres.

The other topics are setting deadlines for the submission of the House of Representatives impeachment record, for the filing of motions, for the exchange of witness lists and exhibit lists, and projected time required by the parties for the presentation of their cases.

The committee will allow public comments at the start of the conference. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

It's been two years of COVID. It's time for a full accounting of our response

There's no great way to mark the exact moment when the pandemic began in the U.S. Was it when the first domestic case of COVID-19 was confirmed? Was it the day when the U.S. Health and Human Services secretary declared SARS-CoV-2 a public health emergency? Or was it when the first death from COVID was reported on U.S. soil?

The best marker may be the day that then-President Donald Trump declared a national emergency—March 13, 2020. It was a Friday, the end of a scary week of news about the alarming spread of the new and deadly coronavirus, and the announcement precipitated a cascade of actions from coast to coast intended to "flatten the curve." Six days later, Gov. Gavin Newsom issued the nation's first statewide stay-at-home order.

We wish that the second anniversary of that momentous day in U.S. history was an occasion to celebrate. Though many restrictions have ended, the pandemic is not over. Tens of thousands of new cases are reported every day, and more than 30,000 Americans are currently hospitalized with serious cases of COVID-19. Nearly 1 million people in this country have died from COVID-19, and more than a thousand continue to die each day. Millions of Americans are struggling with long-term effects of infection.

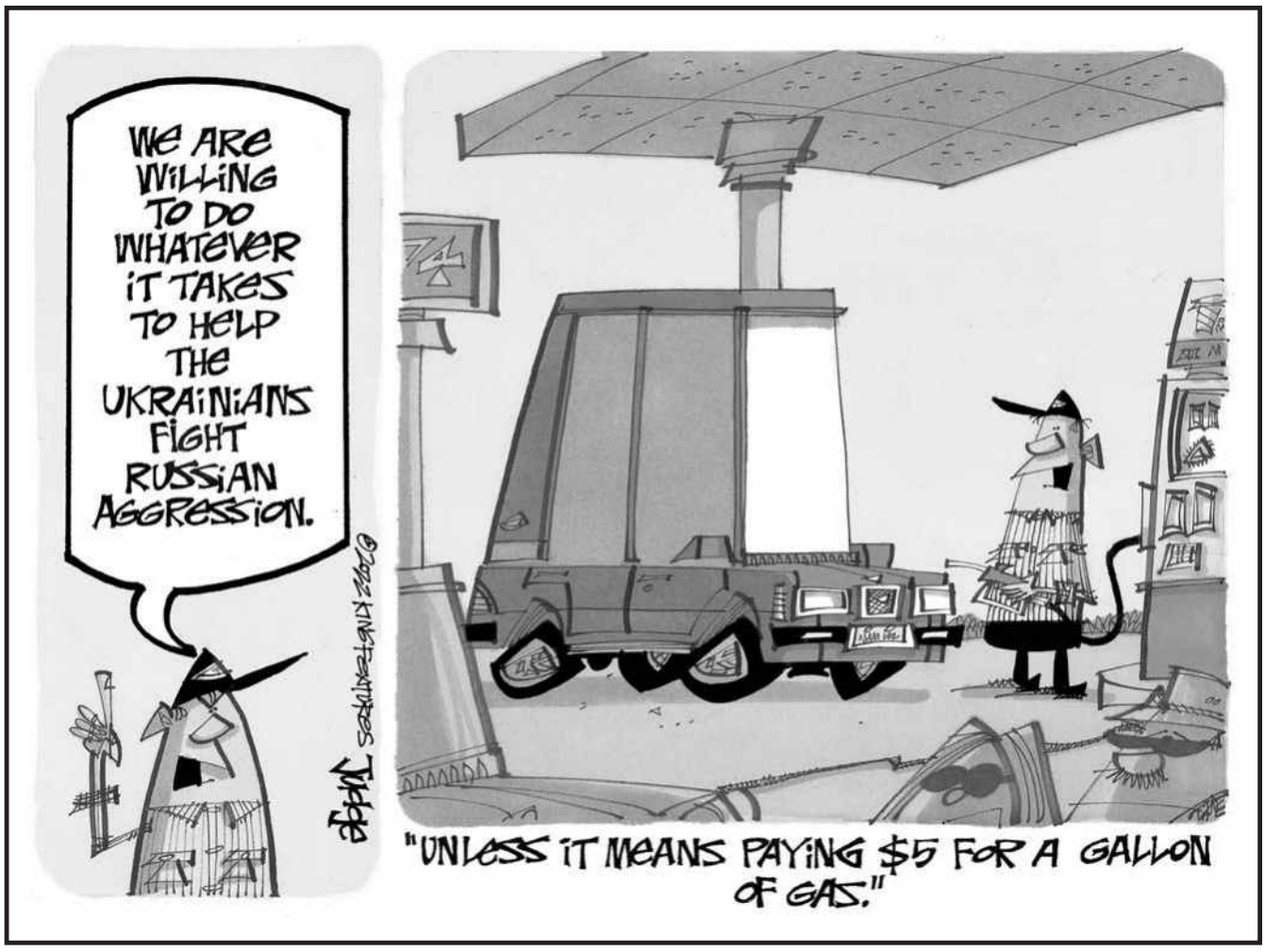
Still, the latest acute phase of the pandemic seems to be waning. The rate of transmission is dropping and state and federal officials have appropriately turned their attention to planning for the long term. This is essential, because scientists expect COVID-19 to be with us indefinitely.

At this time, as health officials consider whether the disease is moving toward an endemic stage, it's appropriate to look back at the state and federal response. Not as an exercise in blame—there's been enough of that over the last two years to fill a book—but a comprehensive, clear-eyed examination similar to that done by the 9/11 commission.

Many elected officials complained during the chaotic months in the first year of the pandemic that there was no playbook for them to follow. They were right. The last viral pandemic of the same scale as COVID-19 happened more than a 100 years earlier, at a time when record keeping and disease reporting were spotty and decades before the creation of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But we can't bank on being safe from another major global viral outbreak until 2122. We owe it to our future selves and our children to do what we can to help them survive the next pandemic.

No one wants to admit mistakes, but a look back will require an honest inventory of the U.S. failures and successes. Happily there's bipartisan support for such an endeavor as part of the PREVENT Pandemics Act introduced in Janu-

See COVID on Next Page


WE ARE WILLING TO DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO HELP THE UKRAINIANS FIGHT RUSSIAN AGGRESSION.
"UNLESS IT MEANS PAYING $5 FOR A GALLON OF GAS."

Someone walks into a church with a gun. Should you fear for your life?

By LANIER SCOTT ISOM
Los Angeles Times

Lanier Scott Isom is an author and journalist in Birmingham, Ala. She co-wrote Lilly Ledbetter's memoir, Grace and Grit: How I Won My Fight at Goodyear and Beyond.

I had never imagined my own murder until one morning in January at the small church my husband and I attend in northern Alabama.

I am sitting in the back pew in the church the Sunday after Epiphany. A man with a military-style haircut opens the front door. The service is almost over. He smiles at me over his face mask as he quietly closes the door. I smile back with my eyes. He whispers, "Can I sit here?" nodding to the empty space beside me. I nod back.

Then I see the gun on his hip and my eyes widen. My heart jump-starts, my knees lock, my body goes cold. He is clothed in olive green, and I can't tell if he is military or paramilitary, a Proud Boy or a plainclothes cop. Is he going to murder us all?

In Alabama, a bill allowing churches to set up their own police forces was signed into law in 2019. The legislation was inspired by a 4,000-person megachurch in Birmingham that was concerned private security measures were inadequate in an era of mass shootings.

Twenty years ago, my husband, Hugo, and I built a getaway cabin on Lookout Mountain at the tail end of the Appalachians. It's a peaceful place to relax with family. There's a resilient, rebellious spirit alive and well here, along with a thriving community of artists.

Next to me, the man's automatic pistol, two cartridges heavy on his other hip, is only inches away. Do I shake off my good Southern manners and go up to the crow's nest where my husband is streaming the service on Zoom to alert him to the danger? A thin layer of sweat gathers under my arms in the chilly church. Fear floats beneath the surface of my awareness, an anxiety fed by the frequent news about mass murders in sacred places like schools and churches and synagogues.

As the man with the gun sings along with the congregation, I can only envision our massacred bodies and imagine myself tackling him no matter what he does. I convince myself I will fight back, but my body betrays me as I remain frozen, unable to act.

Alabama is an open-carry state and has no laws prohibiting firearms in places of worship. During a service in 2015, a pastor in East Selma, Alabama, tried to wrestle a gun from a man after he shot his girlfriend and her son at church. After the pastor was shot, congregants grabbed the gun from the shooter.

Before 1963, no mass murders—defined as four or more peopled killed—had been carried out on a faith-based property in the U.S., according to Carl Chinn, a church security expert and author of "Evil Invades the Sanctuary."

At the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, a gunman stormed a service in 2017, killing 26 people and injuring 20 more. It remains the deadliest shooting at a house of worship in the U.S. in modern times.

The man with the gun takes Communion, and still I do nothing but watch as Hugo follows him and kneels beside him at the altar. I take refuge in the belief Hugo will do something if he feels we are threatened. When Father Bill leans toward the man with the gun, he says, "I hope you're a sheriff," as he offers him the thin, tasteless wafer and recites, "Bread of Heaven."

At the end of the service, Father Bill is standing a few feet away from the man with the gun. "May the peace of the Lord that passeth all understanding go forth with you," he says. His eyes flicker across the gun. As we file out, I realize the man is a sheriff when a parishioner greets him as such and shakes his hand, thanking him for his service.

Later, I ask Father Bill what he thought when he first eyed this gun-toting man. "I started rushing through the service, wondering if I needed to stop and tell everyone to scatter," he says. Then he imagined his own death. "My friend just died of COVID, and I realized it might not be COVID that kills me." It might be the unknown man with a Glock instead. He's so upset he's considering hiring private security for future services.

Twenty-five years ago, if a man with a gun on his hip walked into church or anywhere else, I would have widened my eyes, but I would have assumed, without hesitation, that he worked in law enforcement. Not today. When so much of America is armed, how am I supposed to tell the difference between a would-be terrorist or an undercover cop?

And as long as this is the case, I will continue to live in a heightened state of fear, never truly at peace, especially in a church in an open-carry state.

Yes, Ukraine matters to the Chamorros of the Marianas

RICK'S COLUMN
By RICK PEREZ
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rick Perez used to serve in the U.S. military and has work experiences in public policy research and public affairs. He is passionate about national security and geopolitics and runs a newsletter called Guam Affairs at guamaffairs.substack.com. For questions or comments, contact Perez at rickp7839@gmail.com.

We all know that Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered Russian military forces into Ukraine almost several weeks ago, attacking various areas of the country that has resulted in massive human suffering and outflows into nearby countries that are part of the NATO alliance.

Some say that Putin is a madman, a crazy man, an evil man. Others, such as former president Donald Trump, claim Putin is a genius. A third way to view President Putin is this: he is the leader of a large and diverse country, that like the United States, has thousands of nuclear weapons available for use and has a variety of natural resources that remain in high demand worldwide.

Why Putin is not a crazy man

Vladimir Putin is not crazy nor is he somehow mentally checked out. What Mr. Putin is, is a brilliant former Russian intelligence officer who understands Russia's interests and will go to great lengths to ensure that Russia remains intact as a nation.

Putin views Ukraine as a core strategic interest of the Russian Federation because Ukraine lies on the Russian border. Putin has not and will not accept American, NATO, or EU dominance on Russia's border that advantages the West and the United States in particular.

But why is Putin attacking Ukraine?

The attack on Ukraine makes complete sense for Putin for several reasons and a couple of these reasons stick out. First, Ukraine is a core strategic interest of Russia and Putin will continue to tear apart the country to prevent the West and the United States from turning the place into an American satellite state.

Second, Putin is too sophisticated and intelligent to formally annex Ukraine when he can, instead, kill Ukrainians, precipitate massive outflows of people into NATO countries such as Poland, and effectively maintain Russian influence on this border state.

Why Americans are incentivized to reassess their thinking

There are many reasons why fellow citizens of the American empire should review how they are thinking about the Ukrainian situation. Ukraine is not bordering the United States to the north or to the south because it is not located in the western hemisphere. Ukraine is not China, it is not a potential strategic threat to the United States, and it doesn't do much for the United States or its outlying Pacific Island colonies. The United States has been shifting its focus on China, which if things continue, will overtake America in aggregate economic wealth and technological prowess over time. Now is not the time to refocus on delivering massive resources and billions in aid to Ukraine, when this country is simply not an American core interest.

Unneeded wars, spilled American blood and lost treasure—we still haven't learned our lesson

The 9/11 attacks on the United States were horrific, but not existential to America remaining a superpower. Thousands died, thousands of families suffered horrific losses, and the way America conducted national security and foreign affairs changed. American sons and daughters volunteered to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan and came home in body bags. Hundreds of thousands of civilians—moms, dads, kids, elderly, etc.—died in Iraq and Afghanistan from the fighting. Total estimated national costs to manage this so-called war on terror range upwards to approximately $8 trillion. America lost in Iraq and in Afghanistan, just like Russia lost in Afghanistan.

Now is not the time to get further entangled in NATO and EU politics, especially when some of these NATO countries close to Russia are rapidly moving away from democratic principles and practices.

What our Chamorro people should pay attention to

Ukraine has already precipitated cost of living pressures on our Chamorro people as tightly managed and supplied foodstuff, natural resources, and consumable goods prices continue to skyrocket throughout the Marianas.

The more important consideration for our Chamorro people is this: Can the United States manage itself after being preoccupied with land wars in the central Asiatic region for the past two decades?

Can we continue supplying the Ukrainians with anti-aircraft and anti-tank missile weapons in the form of foreign aid while China and Russia are incentivized to grow their common interests and bilateral relationship? American leaders don't want to establish a no-fly zone in Ukraine nor do national leaders agree on allowing NATO countries to provide massive military weapons to the Ukrainians to fight the Russians. Yet NATO is now preparing over 30,000 troops (which include American troops) to respond to a variety of possible contingencies tied to the fighting in Ukraine.

What is the point?

The point is that America has a greater interest in focusing on Chinese developments and interests and this requires building lasting friendships with countries that border or are located near China. The United States has solid relations with Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, but lags in its strategic relations with India, Iran, and Russia.

Europe is not the world's center of wealth and prosperity, because it is Asia that now holds this distinction.

Northeast Asia, which includes the western Pacific periphery that includes our Marianas Islands, constitutes a core—yes core—national security interest for the United States. If America continues to support NATO when it comes to Ukraine, and all the possible first, second, and third order risks and consequences of placing too much focus on European affairs, we risk losing opportunities to pivot into producing a more positive and real strategic relationship with Russia.

We need Russia on our side because American core interests lie in the Northeast Asiatic region. If we continue to spend time, money, and resources on Ukraine, we will not become any more secure as a nation and will make it easier for the Chinese to outsmart us over the long term, especially if they have a stronger relationship with Russia.

A sonnet for St. Patrick's Day

LITERARY NOOK
By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.

The word "duende" is used in Spanish and Chamorro languages. English speakers use the Irish Gaelic word leprechaun, which has the same meaning. A shanachie is a teller of old tales and legends. "May the best day of your past be the worst day of your future" is an old Irish blessing. Happy St. Patrick's Day.

Duendes Dance from Dublin to Dan Dan

Leprachauns are loose all over the place
from the Mariana Trench to outer space
from downtown Agana to Adelup duendes
dance a fairy loop, leprachauns know the scoop
on Rota from Wedding Cake Mountain to
Sinapalu guaha binadu an man dana todu
from Tinian's Magpo Heights to Marpo Valley
guaha katdon pika yan bula donne sali
from Saipan villages Gualo Rai to Garapan
plenty kim chi, bifstek,and stir fry in the pan
from Susupe Beach over to San Vicente
adobo and tinola they got more than plenty
on Naftan Rock sits Pepe Batbon Connolly
a fat old leprechaun shanachie wannabe.

COVID

From Page 8

ary by Sens. Patty Murray, D-Wash., and Richard Burr, R-N.C. Among other things, the bill would establish a 12-member task force modeled on the 9/11 commission that would examine both the origins of the virus and the federal and state responses.

That's good, but the task force must do more than assess testing and tracing capabilities, supply chains, travel bans and vaccine development. It must seek to address the most vexing failure of the pandemic: the inequity of the impact. By every measure—economic loss, sickness and death—low-income and communities of color were hit harder by the pandemic than others. While it's important to shore up the national stockpile of critical medical supplies, we must also examine the holes in the social safety net exposed by COVID-19.

We can do better next time, if our leaders are brave enough now to commit to a full accounting of their pandemic performance.

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Stop whining about gas prices—freedom costs, and we have to pay our share

By LEONARD GREENE
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

It's three days after President Joe Biden announced a Russian oil ban, and I'm at a full-service station in my large SUV getting $20 worth of gas.

I tell him how much I want, he squeezes on the handle and three seconds later he's asking me for my money.

I start to cry.

Because it wasn't that long ago when a $20 bill would get you a four-second squeeze.

But these are heady times, and the world is a different place than it was just a month ago. We are still battling inflation. The pandemic continues, and there is war in Eastern Europe.

Ugly war.

I check the gas cap to make sure it's tight—don't want any precious fumes escaping—and I think about how we got to this point, and the promises made along the way.

Even before the Russian bullies attacked Ukraine and bombed hospitals and schools and sent refugees scrambling to every corner of the continent, Biden assured us that American troops would not go to battle in this conflict. We would sit this one out.

But Russia must pay for its aggression, the president said, and when harsh sanctions were not enough, that's when Biden announced a ban on Russian oil.

And that's when all the whining started.

Among the chief whiners were Republicans, who had urged Biden to institute the ban. It's the right thing to do, they said. We'll show those Russians, they said.

Then they turned around and blamed the president for the spike in gas prices.

"The idea that we're seeing higher gas prices just because of the invasion is just not true," said U.S. Rep. Nicole Malliotakis, R-N.Y. "We're happy to see this ban on Russian oil, but that's only half of what's needed. We need to be energy independent today. We need diversification."

We need you to be quiet and support your president in a time of global crisis.

Because we're not going to drill our way out of this problem. We're not going to pipeline our way to the promised land.

One day last week it was 70 degrees. Two days later, it was snowing.

How much more of the Earth do we want to sacrifice to fill the tanks on our Navigators and Escalades?

The critics blaming Biden for their pain at the pump are from the same crowd that hold him responsible for inflation.

The consumer price index increased by 7.9% over the last 12 months, the fastest rate of inflation since January 1982.

"Prices continue to skyrocket under Biden and Democrats' reckless policies," said Republican National Committee Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel. "Biden's attempt to deflect blame is an insult to every American and small-business owner struggling to afford the cost of everyday goods."

Never mind that the nation's economy is struggling to recover from a crippling pandemic that happened on a Republican president's watch.

But as much as Biden's critics like to blame him for inflation, they tend to leave inflation out of the equation when it comes to gas prices.

Last week, the price of a gallon of regular gasoline broke a 14-year record in the U.S. According to the American Automobile Association, the national average gas price soared past its previous peak of $4.144 per gallon, set in July 2008, and continued rising to hit $4.326 per gallon on Saturday.

Adjusted for inflation, the real cost of a gallon of gas from July 2008 shoots up to $5.37 in today's dollars—well above the current cost.

"As I have said from the start, there will be costs at home as we impose crippling sanctions in response to Putin's unprovoked war," Biden said. "But Americans can know this: The costs we are imposing on Putin and his cronies are far more devastating than the costs we are facing."

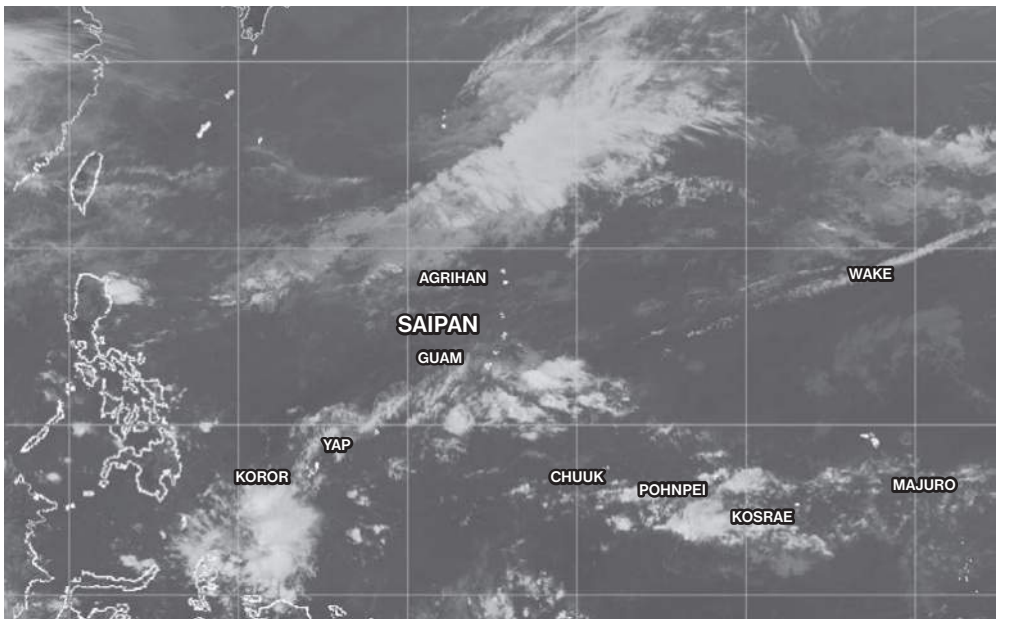
In other words, quit whining. It's not really helping now.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Lows in the upper.
86º 75º	86º 78	86º 78º	87º 75º	87º 76º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:15 AM, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2022

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

East-trade winds prevail over the Marianas this morning. A trade-wind disturbance will bring increasing shower activity to the local area today.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Scattered Thunderstorms	30 / 25 °F
Palau	Scattered Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F
Yap	Scattered Thunderstorms	30 / 26 °F
Chuuk	AM Thunderstorms	28 / 26 °F
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F
Majuro	Thunderstorms	28 / 26 °F

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	06:23 AM	18:27 PM
Friday	06:22 AM	18:27 PM
Saturday	06:22 AM	18:27 PM
Sunday	06:21 AM	18:27 PM
Monday	06:20 AM	18:27 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	05:39 PM	17:36 PM
Friday	-	06:19 PM	18:29 PM
Saturday	-	06:58 PM	19:23 PM
Sunday	-	07:37 PM	20:17 PM
Monday	-	08:19 PM	21:14 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	23 / 16 °F
Beijing	PM Light Snow	4 / 2 °F
Hong Kong	Cloudy	26 / 21 °F
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	28 / 22 °F
London	Sunny	14 / 3 °F
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	26 / 11 °F
Manila	Mostly Cloudy	34 / 26 °F
Melbourne	AM Showers	28 / 18 °F
Miami	Showers	26 / 23°F
New York	Showers	13 / 10 °F
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	19 / 9 °F
Paris	AM Clouds/PM Sun	14 / 4 °F
Busan	PM Light Rain/Win	14 / 7 °F
Rome	Mostly Cloudy	20 / 8 °F
Salem	Partly Cloudy	23 / 11 °F
San Francisco	AM Clouds/PM Sun	15 / 8 °F
Seoul	Cloudy	16 / 4 °F
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	19 / 8 °F
Washington, DC	Rain	16 / 9 °F

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
01:09 AM	Low Tide	-0.06
07:50 AM	High Tide	1.77
1:35 PM	Low Tide	0.35
6:57 PM	High Tide	1.57

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

■ Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

■ Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.

■ Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.

■ Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

■ Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

■ Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html

■ Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

■ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

■ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

■ Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

• Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

• Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

• Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 14, 2022

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	7:20am	8:05am	2, 4, 6
UA117	9:50am	10:35am	1, 3, 5, 7

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	6:30am	8:20am	1, 3, 5
UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	7:20am	9:50pm	2, 4, 6 via Guam
UA117/183	9:50am	9:50pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via Guam

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

7C3406	3:10PM	6:55PM	Every 4 days (Jan 29-Mar 30)
TW9308	3:30PM	7:20PM	4, 7
OZ6243	4:00PM	7:40PM	3, 6

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

BX621	3:10PM	6:30PM	7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA116	5:30am	6:16am	2, 4, 6
UA116	8:00am	8:46am	7
UA174	8:00am	8:46am	1, 3, 5

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	2, 4, 7
UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	2, 5
UA184	10:55pm	4:45am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/116	10:40pm	6:16am+1	5 via Guam
UA184/174	10:40pm	8:46am+1	2 via Guam
UA184/116	10:55pm	6:16am+1	1, 3 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:46am+1	4, 7 via Guam
UA184/116	10:55pm	8:46am+1	6 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3405	8:30AM	2:10PM	Every 4 days (Jan 29-Mar 30)
TW9307	9:00AM	Q2:30PM	4, 7
OZ6233	9:00AM	2:30PM	3, 6

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

BX622	8:00AM	1:10PM	7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Daily
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Daily
1303	1:30PM	2:00PM	Tues/Wed/ Thurs/Fri
1304	3:30PM	4:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Daily
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Daily
3103	1:30PM	3:00PM	Tues/Wed/ Thurs/Fri
3104	4:30PM	5:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Daily
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Daily
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business

New Zealand to 'welcome the world back' as tourism restarts

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said Wednesday her nation was "ready to welcome the world back" with most tourists allowed to return by May as the nation continues to ease its coronavirus restrictions.

The announcement bought forward the date that tourists from countries including the U.S., Canada, Britain and much of Europe can visit from the previously announced date of October.

International tourism used to account for about 20% of New Zealand's foreign income and more than 5% of GDP.

But when the pandemic began, New Zealand enacted some of the world's strictest border controls and tourism evaporated. The measures were initially credited with saving thousands of lives and allowed New Zealand to eliminate or contain several outbreaks.

AP

Passengers arrive at Auckland's International Airport, in Auckland, New Zealand, Wednesday, March 16, 2022.

But with the omicron variant now spreading throughout the country, the border restrictions have become largely irrelevant.

Ardern said the move would boost the economy.

"Closing our border was one of the first actions we took to stop COVID-19 over two years ago, and its reopening will spur our economic recovery throughout the remainder of the year," she said.

Under the new timeline, tourists from Australia will be able to visit from April 12 and tourists from other visa-waiver countries can visit from May 1. Tourists from non-waiver countries—including India and China—will need to wait longer, unless they already have valid visitor visas.

Tourists must be vaccinated and test negative for the virus before leaving their home country and again after arriving in New Zealand.

"I know from visiting tourism operators, and talking to their staff, how tough these past two years have been," Ardern said. "And not only because of the massive loss of tourism revenue, but because we lost something we derived so much of our identity from."

New Zealand is renowned for its beautiful scenery and adrenalin-inducing adventure tourism. The announcement comes as a timely boost to ski fields trying to plan for the upcoming Southern Hemisphere winter.

Biden urges private companies to help narrow gender pay gap

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden marked Equal Pay Day on Tuesday by spotlighting new steps aimed at closing the gender pay gap for federal workers and contractors. And he urged private companies to do likewise.

Biden signed an Equal Pay Day executive order that encourages—but does not order—the government to consider banning federal contractors from seeking information about job applicants' prior salary history. The Labor Department also issued a directive aimed at strengthening federal contractors' obligations to audit payrolls to help guard against pay disparities based on gender, race or ethnicity.

"It's my hope that it sets an example for all private companies to follow as well," Biden said after signing the executive order. "Gender equality is not a women's issue alone. It benefits everybody."

The Office of Personnel Management was directed to consider a regulation to address the use of prior salary history in hiring and setting compensation for federal workers.

Equal Pay Day is designed to call attention to how much longer women must work to earn what men earn.

Data show that while the pay gap is at its smallest ever, the coronavirus pandemic has altered women's labor force participation so that "what we're seeing is an artificial narrowing," said Jasmine Tucker, director of research at the National Women's Law Center.

For instance, women who remained in the labor force during the pandemic and worked full time often had higher earnings than their counterparts who lost low-paying jobs, so 2020 figures should not be compared with wage gap data from prior years, Tucker said.

The cloud of the pandemic cast a shadow over this year's Equal Pay Day events at the White House—which included speeches by prominent activists and a familiar Biden administration refrain for workers to join unions.

Pfizer asks US to allow 4th COVID vaccine dose for seniors

WASHINGTON (AP)—Pfizer and its partner BioNTech asked U.S. regulators Tuesday to authorize an additional booster dose of their COVID-19 vaccine for seniors, saying data from Israel suggests older adults would benefit.

Currently the U.S. urges two primary shots followed months later by a booster dose for everyone age 12 and older. The new application seeks to add a fourth shot only for the over-65 population that has been hit hardest by the pandemic.

The Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control would have to approve the request. If so, a key question would be how soon seniors would be advised to roll up their sleeves.

While authorities say the vaccinations continue to offer strong protection against severe illness, they haven't held up as well against milder infections especially those due to the omicron mutant. With COVID-19 cases finally plummeting after the intense omicron surge, public health experts are starting to look ahead to what next steps might be needed—if a new variant crops up or, barring that, whether to try shoring up coronavirus protection in the fall at the same time people get flu vaccinations.

AP

Prepared Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine syringes wait for patients at a middle school in Wheeling, Ill., June 11, 2021.

Speaking to CBS' "Face the Nation" on Sunday, Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla signaled the company's plans.

"The protection that you are getting from the third, it is good enough, actually quite good for hospitalizations and deaths. It's not that good against infections," he said. "But we are just submitting those data to the FDA and then we will see what the experts also will say outside Pfizer."

The U.S. booster campaign was based on evidence that the shots' effectiveness, particularly against milder infections, was waning about six months after the last dose. Calls for a third shot grew once it became clear the vaccines weren't as strong against the omicron mutant as they were against earlier versions of the virus.

UK's Johnson visits Saudi Arabia, seeks more oil

LONDON (AP)—British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is visiting Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates on Wednesday as part of his efforts to press for increased oil production from the Gulf states to reduce dependence on Russian energy.

Johnson

In a statement released by his office Tuesday, Johnson called Saudi Arabia and the UAE "key international partners" in his bid to wean the West off Russian oil and gas, improve energy security and coordinate action against Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The controversial visit has sparked an outcry of protest from U.K. lawmakers and rights groups, coming just days after Saudi Arabia said it executed 81 people in the largest known mass execution in the kingdom's modern history.

Johnson planned to meet with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed in the United Arab Emirates, then travel to Saudi Arabia for a meeting with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. He is expected to talk about increasing Gulf energy supplies as well as discuss international coordination in dialing up diplomatic and economic pressure on Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"The U.K. is building an international coalition to deal with the new reality we face. The world must wean itself off Russian hydrocarbons and starve Putin's addiction to oil and gas," Johnson said in the statement. "Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are key international partners in that effort."

Johnson is also seeking to boost Saudi investment in the U.K.'s renewable energy sector. During the trip, Saudi Arabia's Alfanar group is expected to confirm a new 1 billion pound ($1.3 billion) investment in a sustainable aviation fuel project in northern England.

Ahead of the trip, Johnson said Western leaders made a "terrible mistake" by letting Putin "get away with" annexing Crimea from Ukraine in 2014. He wrote in the Daily Telegraph that Western dependence on Russian energy supplies had emboldened Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

"The world cannot be subject to this continuous blackmail," Johnson wrote. "As long as the West is economically dependent on Putin, he will do all he can to exploit that dependence."

But many U.K. lawmakers, including those in Johnson's own Conservative party, questioned the decision to turn to Saudi Arabia, citing the recent mass execution and the kingdom's human rights record.

Defending his trip, Johnson told reporters in London that "if we are going to stand up to Putin's bullying," it will be necessary to talk to other energy producers.

His spokesman said Johnson will raise the issue of the executions with the government in Riyadh during his visit.

Johnson's government announced last week that the U.K. will phase out the import of Russian oil and oil products by the end of the year. But the U.K. is much less reliant on Russia fuel than its European allies, taking about 3% of its gas from Russia, Johnson said.

Nation

Man suspected of stalking, killing homeless people arrested

WASHINGTON (AP)—A man suspected of stalking and shooting homeless people asleep on the streets of New York City and Washington was arrested early Tuesday. Police said at least two people were killed and three others wounded in the attacks.

The suspect, Gerald Brevard was arrested in Washington on murder, assault and other charges after news of the killings had added new fears to people spending nights on the streets of the two cities and elsewhere.

The 30-year-old man, who lives in the Washington area, was charged Tuesday only in connection with the Washington cases and has not been charged in the New York attacks. Brevard has a criminal history that includes assaulting a police officer and assault with a deadly weapon and was in custody Tuesday. He was being questioned by both New York and Washington detectives.

Police in the two cities earlier released multiple surveillance photographs, including a closeup showing the suspect's face that was obtained from an ATM surveillance camera in Washington, and urged people who might know him to come forward. Investigators used ballistic evidence and tips to help link the shootings, and a tipster called police with information about the suspect's identity, officials said.

Police are now contacting other cities to determine whether or not the suspect might be responsible for attacks elsewhere. Though he hasn't been charged yet in the New York cases, police feel "very confident" they have identified the correct suspect, Metropolitan Police Chief Robert Contee said.

All of the shootings involved .22-caliber bullets, and surveillance photos and video, along with witness statements, all pointed to a single suspect—a man wearing distinctive sneakers, black pants and the same face mask, New York Police Department Chief of Detectives James Essig told reporters.

Police on Tuesday identified the Washington victim who died as 54-year-old Morgan Holmes. The New York victim was not identified.

New York detectives were in Washington and participating in interviews with the suspect, Essig said. But investigators did not immediately find anything further connecting the suspect to New York beyond surveillance video and ballistics evidence or any social media postings or other evidence explaining a motive.

Brevard hasn't offered any inkling of a motive during interviews with detectives, and authorities believe he may have been randomly targeting the victims, Contee said.

D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser and New York City Mayor Eric Adams credited the swift coordination between the two police departments and the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. ATF agents took Brevard into custody around 2:30 a.m. Tuesday morning before handing him over to detectives in Washington. They have not yet recovered a gun.

White House: Biden will travel to Europe for Ukraine talks

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden will travel to Europe next week for face-to-face talks with European leaders about the Russian invasion of Ukraine, White House press secretary Jen Psaki announced Tuesday.

Biden will meet with European leaders at an extraordinary NATO summit in Brussels on March 24. He will also attend a scheduled European Council summit, where efforts to impose sanctions and further humanitarian efforts are underway.

"While he's there, his goal is to meet in person face-to-face with his European counterparts and talk about, assess where we are at this point in the conflict in the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. We've been incredibly aligned to date," Psaki said. "That doesn't happen by accident. The president is a big believer in face-to-face diplomacy. So it's an opportunity to do exactly that."

The White House announced the president's travel shortly before Biden on Tuesday signed a bill providing $13.6 billion in additional military and humanitarian aid to Ukraine as part of a $1.5 trillion government spending measure.

Biden said at the bill signing ceremony that the U.S. was "moving urgently to further augment the support to the brave people of Ukraine, as they defend their country."

The trip follows Vice President Kamala Harris' visit to eastern flank NATO countries of Poland and Romania last week to discuss with leaders the growing refugee crisis in eastern Europe sparked by the Russian invasion and to underscore the Biden administration's support for NATO allies.

Poland's foreign minister Zbigniew Rau said Tuesday that a visit by Biden to Poland was "very probable" when he comes to Europe. More than 1.8 million Ukrainians have fled to Poland since the start of the war, according to the United Nations. More than 3 million people have fled Ukraine since Russian launched its invasion.

"It would be hard to imagine a better place for the United States and for the entire alliance to stress their position than the brightest link on the eastern flank, that Poland is," Rau told Polish state TVP INFO.

Psaki said she did not have additional details about whether Biden would visit Poland during the trip.

No charges against 2 Chicago officers in fatal shootings

AP

This April 16, 2021 file photo shows protesters marching near Mayor Lori Lightfoot's home in Logan Square to protest the fatal shooting by Chicago police of 13-year-old Adam Toledo.

CHICAGO (AP)—No charges will be filed against the Chicago police officers who chased and fatally shot 13-year-old Adam Toledo and 22-year-old Anthony Alvarez within days of each other last year, prompting sharp criticism of how the department handles foot pursuits, a prosecutor announced Tuesday.

Cook County State's Attorney Kim Foxx said there was insufficient evidence to charge the officers in the deaths, which were captured on video that showed both suspects appeared to have handguns prior to the shootings.

The public release of the videos in April 2021 renewed calls for reform of the Chicago Police Department, which for decades has had a reputation for brutality, misconduct and racism. And it came as videos of police confrontations put departments around the country under heavy scrutiny, especially after the footage from 2020 that helped lead to a murder conviction in the death of George Floyd.

In both Chicago shootings, officers chased suspects on foot—a highly unpredictable situation that critics, including the U.S. Department of Justice, have said is dangerous for both officers and suspects and leads to too many unnecessary shootings.

The deaths led to protests and calls for Chicago to adopt clear guidelines for officers on pursuits, though a policy still has not been finalized.

In February, Alvarez's family sued the city of Chicago, saying it is partly responsible for his death because of the lack of a foot pursuit policy.

Foxx also was critical Tuesday of the officers in the shooting death of Alvarez, saying they created the situation that put them in danger. Alvarez was walking when officers approached him because of a traffic incident the night before.

Alvarez ran away, turned a corner and fell, Foxx said. When Officer Eric Solano turned the corner, Alvarez was getting up off the ground, and it appeared to the officer that Alvarez was about to shoot him, she said.

"As he (Alvarez) began to use both hands to push himself off the ground, Officer Solano arrived at the corner of the residence and observed Mr. Alvarez in a crouching position with a handgun in his right hand," Foxx said. That led Solano, she said, to believe Alvarez "was waiting to ambush him."

Senate approves bill to make daylight saving time permanent

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Senate unanimously approved a measure Tuesday that would make daylight saving time permanent across the United States next year.

The bipartisan bill, named the Sunshine Protection Act, would ensure Americans would no longer have to change their clocks twice a year. But the bill still needs approval from the House, and the signature of President Joe Biden, to become law.

"No more switching clocks, more daylight hours to spend outside after school and after work, and more smiles—that is what we get with permanent Daylight Saving Time," Sen. Ed Markey of Massachusetts, the original cosponsor of the legislation, said in a statement.

Markey was joined on the chamber floor by senators from both parties as they made the case for how making daylight saving time permanent would have positive effects on public health and the economy and even cut energy consumption.

"Changing the clock twice a year is outdated and unnecessary," Republican Sen. Rick Scott of Florida said.

"I've said it before and I'll say it again: Americans want more sunshine and less depression—people in this country, all the way from Seattle to Miami, want the Sunshine Protection Act," Sen. Patty Murray of Washington added.

Nearly a dozen states across the U.S. have already standardized daylight saving time.

Daylight saving time is defined as a period between spring and fall when clocks in most parts of the country are set one hour ahead of standard time. Americans last changed their clocks on Sunday. Standard time lasts for roughly four months in most of the country.

Members of Congress have long been interested in the potential benefits and costs of daylight saving time since it was first adopted as a wartime measure in 1942. The proposal will now go to the House, where the Energy and Commerce Committee had a hearing to discuss possible legislation last week.

Asia

China says it's 'impartial' on Ukraine, denies aiding Russia

BEIJING (AP)—China on Tuesday said its stance on the Ukraine conflict is "completely objective, impartial and constructive," and repeated accusations the U.S. is spreading misinformation over reports Beijing has responded positively to a Russian request for military supplies.

Beijing has refused to criticize Russia over its invasion of Ukraine, or even to refer to the conflict as a "war".

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian's comments came after U.S. adviser Jake Sullivan and senior Chinese foreign policy adviser Yang Jiechi met in Rome on Monday, with the Biden administration increasingly concerned that China is using the Ukraine war to advance Beijing's long-term interest in its competition with the United States.

Also Tuesday, the European Union ambassador to China, Nicolas Chapuis, called on China to support Ukraine. "There can be no so-called neutrality," he said.

Speaking to reporters at a daily briefing, Zhao said the "U.S. has created and spread disinformation ... This is not only unprofessional, but also immoral and irresponsible."

"What the U.S. should do is to deeply reflect on the role it has played in the development and evolving of the Ukraine crisis, and do something practical to ease the tension in Ukraine," he said, in a nod to China's contention that Russia was provoked by NATO's expansion and threats to its security.

At his meeting with Yang, Sullivan sought clarity on Beijing's posture, warning the Chinese anew that assistance for Russia—including helping it avert sanctions imposed by the U.S.-led bloc—would be costly for them.

The Kremlin has denied reports it requested Chinese military equipment for use in the war.

In keeping with Russian preferences, Zhao has referred to the war as the "Ukraine issue." Beijing also opposes sanctions that are pummeling the Russian economy.

N. Korean missile explodes in failed launch

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—A North Korean missile fired from its capital region exploded in mid-air in an apparent failed launch on Wednesday, South Korea's military said, amid speculation that the North could soon launch its biggest long-range missile in its most significant provocation in years.

Details of the missile explosion weren't immediately known. But the launch, the 10th of its kind this year, shows North Korea is determined to press ahead on its push to modernize its weapons arsenal and pressure its rivals into making concessions amid dormant denuclearization talks.

The North Korean missile blew up while it was flying at an altitude of about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles), a South Korean military official said requesting anonymity because he wasn't publicly authorized to speak to media on the issue. He said the cause of the explosion wasn't known.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff earlier said in a statement that the launch made from the Pyongyang region around 9:30 a.m. apparently failed. It said South Korean and U.S. intelligence authorities were analyzing details of the launch.

The U.S. Indo-Pacific Command later said that North Korea fired a ballistic missile but didn't say whether it was a failed launch. A command statement said the launch didn't pose an immediate threat to U.S. territory and its allies but called on North Korea to refrain from further destabilizing acts.

Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno told reporters that a flight of a ballistic missile has not been confirmed and that Tokyo is working with Washington and Seoul to further analyze what happened.

ASIAN BRIEFS

2 killed, several hurt in Indonesia's Papua province protest

JAYAPURA, Indonesia (AP)—Two people died and several others were wounded at a demonstration against the new autonomous region in Indonesia's Papua province Tuesday, police said. A peaceful demonstration was carried out for three hours in Yahukimo district Tuesday afternoon. But friction between the people, coupled with a provocation, broke the peace as buildings were set ablaze around the demonstration area. Some participants began clashing with local police officers. "There were victims both from the police officers and the community who were affected by police actions which resulted in death," Ahmad Musthofa Kamal, spokesperson of Papua Police, said in a written statement. Two people died of gunshots by police officers and several people were also wounded, including a police officer.

India court upholds ban on hijab in schools and colleges

NEW DELHI (AP)—An Indian court Tuesday upheld a ban on wearing hijab in class in the southern state of Karnataka, saying the Muslim headscarf is not an essential religious practice of Islam in a ruling that is likely to further deepen religious tensions in the country. The high court in Karnataka state delivered the verdict after considering petitions filed by Muslim students challenging a government ban on hijabs that some schools and colleges have implemented in the last two months. The ban does not extend to other Indian states, but the court ruling could set a precedent for the rest of the country.

Japan-US marine combat drills held amid China, Russia worry

GOTEMBA, Japan (AP)—Japanese and U.S. Marines had their first airborne landing and combat training together on Tuesday near Mt. Fuji as the two allies strengthen military cooperation amid growing maritime activity by China and Russia in the regional seas. Japan has been expanding its defense budget and capability for about a decade and is now revising its key national security strategy in the face of threats from China, North Korea and now Russia. On Tuesday, 400 troops from Japan's Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade and 600 U.S. Marines based on Japan's southern island of Okinawa jointly practiced landing and combat operations in a scenario of an enemy invasion of a remote Japanese island, using tilt-rotor Ospreys, amphibious armored vehicles and artilleries such as M777.

World

AP

A firefighter walks outside a destroyed apartment building after a bombing in a residential area in Kyiv, Ukraine, Tuesday, March 15, 2022.

Russia steps up its assaults as Ukraine appeals for more help

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—Russia escalated its bombardment of the Ukrainian capital and launched new assaults on the port city of Mariupol, making bloody advances on the ground as Ukraine's president prepared Wednesday to make a direct appeal for more help in a rare speech by a foreign leader to the U.S. Congress.

As the invasion entered its third week, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy suggested there was still some reason to be optimistic negotiations might yet yield an agreement with the Russian government.

After their delegations met Tuesday via video, Zelenskyy said Russia's demands were becoming "more realistic." The sides were expected to speak again later Wednesday.

"Efforts are still needed, patience is needed," he said in his video address to the nation. "Any war ends with an agreement."

Developments on the diplomatic front and on the ground occurred as the number of people fleeing Ukraine amid Europe's heaviest fighting since World War II eclipsed 3 million.

Zelenskyy, previewing his speech to the U.S. Congress, thanked President Joe Biden and "all the friends of Ukraine" for $13.6 billion in new support.

He appealed for more weapons and more sanctions to punish Russia and repeated his call to "close the skies over Ukraine to Russian missiles and planes."

He said Russian forces had been unable to move deeper into Ukrainian territory Tuesday but had continued their heavy shelling of cities.

Over the past day, 28,893 civilians were able to flee the fighting through nine humanitarian corridors, although the Russians refused to allow aid into Mariupol, he said.

Russian warships around midnight fired missiles and artillery at the Ukrainian sea coast near Tuzla, to the south of Odesa, Interior Ministry adviser Anton Gerashchenko said.

"They fired a huge amount of ammunition from a great distance," he said Wednesday on Facebook.

Gerashchenko said Russia wanted to test Ukraine's coastal defense system. He said there was no attempt to land troops. He didn't say whether any of the shelling hit anything.

On Tuesday, the leaders of three European Union countries—Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia—visited Kyiv in a bold show of support amid the danger.

Russia's bombardment of the capital appeared to become more systematic and edged closer to the city center, smashing apartments, a subway station and other civilian sites. Zelenskyy said the barrages hit four multi-story buildings and killed dozens.

A senior U.S. defense official, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss the Pentagon's assessment, said the Russians were using long-range fire to hit civilian targets inside Kyiv with increasing frequency but that their ground forces were making little to no progress around the country. The official said Russian troops were still about 15 kilometers (9 miles) from the center of the capital.

The official said the U.S. has seen indications that Russia believes it may need more troops or supplies than it has on hand in Ukraine, and it is considering ways to get more resources into the country. The official did not elaborate.

The employee of Russian state television who was arrested after interrupting a live news program by protesting the war in Ukraine said she was not allowed to sleep in police custody and was interrogated for 14 hours.

She was fined about about $270, but still could face a prison sentence.

"These were very difficult days of my life because I literally went two full days without sleep, the interrogation lasted for more than 14 hours and they didn't allow me to contact my family and close friends, didn't provide any legal support," Marina Ovsyannikova said after she was released.

Ovsyannikova, an employee of Channel 1, walked into the studio during Monday's evening news show with a poster saying "stop the war, don't believe the propaganda, they are lying to you here." In English, it said "no war" at the top of the poster and "Russians against the war" at the bottom.

Before Tuesday's talks, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Moscow would press its demands that Ukraine drop its bid to join NATO, adopt a neutral status and "demilitarize."

Environment

Miss NMI Earth leads Bantalan cleanup

By IVA MAURIN
CORRESPONDENT

This past Saturday was a chance for about 30 people to go to the beach—not to soak up the sun and have fun but to volunteer and pick up trash.

2021 Miss Northern Mariana Islands Earth Crystal Fiona Rio led a cleanup last Saturday at the Bantalan (Sugar Dock) Beach in Chalan Kanoa, southwest of Saipan, that was also participated in by the Rotaract Club, Marianas High School's Interact Club, Grace Christian Academy's National Honors Society, Island Keepers CNMI, and the Saipan Maga'Haga Lady Eagles Club.

The cleanup was originally scheduled to be held a week prior in Garapan, to end up in Fishing Base—to focus more on urban areas—but was cancelled due to heavy rains. The reigning NMI Earth queen said that she still did go to check the area of trash, and expressed appreciation to residents there for keeping the site clean.

According to Rio, she then chose to do the cleanup at Bantalan last Saturday instead because, being a popular venue for beach parties, a lot of trash ends up getting thrown in the area, despite the many trash cans on site.

"Hopefully, they get to the trash cans and use it," Rio said. "We have a lot of tourists coming in. We're always seen as the paradise. We can't really be a paradise if everything is all trashed and messy. We're the locals here. We're the people living on this island and if we can't take care of the island, what about the tourists? What is that going to say to the tourists, the kids, the future generations?"

2021 Miss Northern Mariana Islands Earth Crystal Fiona Rio picks up trash by the beach.
IVA MAURIN

teered at the cleanup where the most common trash that they picked up were cigarette butts.

Lamar appeals to those who litter, asking them to throw trash in the proper bins, pointing out that it is easy to find trash cans because there are plenty in the area. Villagomez, in turn, called on young people like them to make cleanups a habit and to teach others to do the same.

"It would be important for the younger generations to take part in different environmental events—there's environment, the culture,

Island Keepers CNMI volunteers join Miss NMI Earth Crystal Fiona Rio in picking up trash in Bantalan (Sugar Dock). Aside from cleaning up along the shore, this duo also picked up cans and wrappers thrown at the edge of the dock.
IVA MAURIN

Let's Go Diving Saipan diver Henry Manipon joins the cleanup early morning Saturday at the Bantalan as he shared seeing a lot of trash when he goes diving.
IVA MAURIN

Soleil Lamar and Susana Villagomez of Grace Christian Academy's National Honors Society pick up cigarette butts in Bantalan (Sugar Dock) early morning Saturday.
IVA MAURIN

Rotaract Club of Saipan's Lesly D. Ibarra and Brent Michael Espinosa are all smiles after volunteering at the two-hour cleanup led by 2021 Miss NMI Earth Crystal Fiona Rio last Saturday at Bantalan (Sugar Dock).
IVA MAURIN

The future leads

Joining Miss NMI Earth's call for people to throw trash in proper bins were Soleil Lamar and Susana Villagomez of Grace Christian Academy's National Honors Society. The two also volunteered at the cleanup where the most common trash that they picked up were cigarette butts.

Lamar appeals to those who litter, asking them to throw trash in the proper bins, pointing out that it is easy to find trash cans because there are plenty in the area. Villagomez, in turn, called on young people like them to make cleanups a habit and to teach others to do the same.

"It would be important for the younger generations to take part in different environmental events—there's environment, the culture, anything to keep the islands alive," Rio added. "The fact that we are taking care of ourselves—that we are taking care of our beaches where tourists and the locals go to a lot—the fact we're taking care of it is very important because we all come here to enjoy and see [its] beauty."

Volunteering in cleanups is important for young generations, given that the island is small, according to Rotaract Club of Saipan volunteer Lesly D. Ibarra.

"We are a group of young adults just trying to help out in community," Ibarra said. "For people our age, the best thing we can do is to just do small steps at a time and help out as best as we can. It's important because this is where we live and, being raised here, this is the least I can do to help out the environment for the next generation."

Young people made up about two-thirds of the volunteers in last Saturday's cleanup. Rio said that young people getting involved in community events set the standard, not only for their peers but for the adults as well.

"If they see that we can take action for the environment, they should know that we also have the ability to take care of our community as well," she said.

A collective responsibility

It's not just the youth who need to exert all efforts and spend time helping out. Taking care of the environment is everyone's responsibility.

Let's Go Diving Saipan diver Henry Manipon also spent his Saturday morning picking up trash in Bantalan.

"I hope people will not forget to pick up their trash after spending time here in the beach. Don't forget our responsibilities to clean our beach after we use it. Just to say thank you to nature for giving us beautiful blue waters and surroundings over here," Manipon added.

The next cleanup that Miss Northern Marianas Earth will be having, in partnership with Island Keepers CNMI, is at the Old Man by the Sea, this weekend, March 19 and 20, from 8am to 4pm. Hikers, athletes, and joggers are encouraged to participate.

Volunteers from the Marianas High School's Interact Club help haul bags filled with garbage to the Sugar Dock signage, which were then picked up later to be sent to the landfill.
IVA MAURIN

Life & Style

Two Fox journalists killed in Ukraine, underscoring dangers

NEW YORK (AP)—A veteran videographer and a 24-year-old Ukrainian journalist working for Fox News were both killed when their vehicle came under fire outside of Kyiv, the network said on Tuesday.

Pierre Zakrzewski, 55, and Oleksandra "Sasha" Kuvshynova were traveling Monday in Horenka with Fox News reporter Benjamin Hall, who remains hospitalized.

"Today is a heartbreaking day for Fox News Media and for all journalists risking their lives to deliver the news," the network's CEO, Suzanne Scott. said in a staff memo.

On Sunday, documentary filmmaker Brent Renaud, another veteran of covering war zones, died when Russian forces opened fire on his vehicle in Irpin, also outside of Kyiv.

The death of three journalists in a short span underscores the dangers faced by people chronicling the war in Ukraine, even those with extensive experience reporting from conflict zones.

The dangers for journalists seem to be increasing by the day, as the fighting seems to get more brutal and concentrated in more urban areas, said Summer Lopez, director of the Free Expressions Program at PEN America.

Zakrzewski, an Irish citizen who was based in London, had covered conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria for Fox and won an internal "unsung hero" award for playing a key role last year in getting Fox's freelancers and their families out of Afghanistan after the U.S. withdrawal. He had been working in Ukraine since February.

"Such a fine man," tweeted Fox national security reporter Jennifer Griffin.

Trey Yingst, another colleague who worked with Zakrzewski in Ukraine, called him "as good as they come."

Kuvshynova was a local "fixer," as is known in war zones. She helped Fox crews navigate the Kyiv area, gathered information and spoke to sources. She had a passion for music, the arts and photography, Scott said in the staff memo.

Olivia Rodrigo, BTS, Billie Eilish to perform at Grammys

The Grammy Awards are bringing three of the world's biggest pop acts—Olivia Rodrigo, BTS and Billie Eilish—to perform during next month's ceremony in Las Vegas.

The Recording Academy announced the first slate of performers on Tuesday that also includes Brandi Carlile, Brothers Osborne and Lil Nas X with Jack Harlow. The show will air live on April 3 from the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas on CBS and Paramount+.

The Grammys shifted to Las Vegas due to the rising COVID-19 cases and the omicron variant in January, with organizers citing "too many risks" to hosting the performance-filled ceremony at the time.

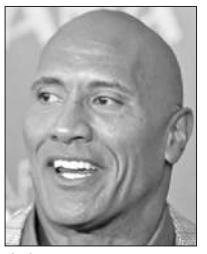
Trevor Noah returns as host for the second straight time.

The multitalented Jon Batiste is the leading nominee with 11 nods in a variety of genres including R&B, jazz, American roots music, classical and music video. Justin Bieber, Doja Cat and H.E.R. are tied for the second-most nominations with eight apiece.

Dwayne Johnson credits females in his life for shaping him

NEW YORK (AP)—Dwayne Johnson's two younger daughters, Jasmine and Tiana, love to play a game where they make him close his eyes. They go into the kitchen and dump ingredients into a bowl.

"They're getting flour and water and I can hear, 'Where's the oil?' and I know what's coming," said Johnson. He squints his eyes to peek and sees them approaching. "I'm like, 'OK, I'm not going to look.' and then bam! It's dumped over my head."


Johnson

Johnson's playful submission with his girls is a contrast to the persona introduced in his former career as a WWE superstar and now as a successful actor known for films such as "The Scorpion King," "The Fast and Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw" and "Jungle Cruise." Despite his 6-foot-5-inch height and muscled physique, Johnson isn't afraid to show vulnerability and share the lessons he's learned.

Man wanted in stabbing at New York's MoMA arrested in Philly

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—A man suspected of stabbing two workers at New York's Museum of Modern Art and making threats regarding former President Donald Trump was arrested at a Philadelphia bus terminal early Tuesday after setting his hotel room on fire, police said.

Gary Cabana, 60, had been sought by police since Saturday. Philadelphia police found him sleeping on a bench and he was arrested without incident. He was charged with arson and other offenses for the hotel fire.

New York City police said they would seek to have him extradited, but did not provide a specific time frame for when that might happen.

Speaking Tuesday at a news conference, New York City Police Department Chief of Detectives James Essig said that in addition to assault charges related to the museum stabbings, Cabana is charged with a prior unrelated assault and aggravated harassment for sending threats by email.

The Eiffel Tower grows even higher, thanks to new antenna

PARIS (AP)—The Eiffel Tower grew by six meters (nearly 20 feet) on Tuesday after engineers hoisted a new communications antenna at the very top of France's most iconic landmark.

Tourists watched from the Trocadero esplanade as the new digital radio antenna was helicoptered up. With the new antenna, the Eiffel Tower grew from 324 meters (1,063 feet) tall to 330 meters (1,083 feet).

The Eiffel Tower company's president, Jean-François Martins, told The Associated Press that scientific progress is an integral part of the Iron Lady's 133-year history.

"It's a historical moment this morning, because the Eiffel Tower is getting higher, which is not so common," he said.

"From the invention of the radio at the beginning of the 20th century to right now, decades after decades, the Eiffel Tower has been a partner for all the radio technology," Martins said.

The Eiffel Tower was 312 meters (1,024 feet) high when it was inaugurated on March 31, 1889.

AP

A new telecom transmission TDF (TeleDiffusion de France) antenna hanging from an Eurocopter Ecureuil 2 helicopter is lowered on the top of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, Tuesday, March 15, 2022.

Man insulted when his wife is asked to be a godmother

DEAR ABBY: I have a girlfriend, "Dawn," who is one of my oldest friends. She's my only friend who stuck with me through the growing pains and different stages in my life. I married a man who I think is the love of my life. He's very macho and proud. We have built a life together, and through stepchildren, exes and family—through thick and thin—our love has endured.

Well, my husband is also possessive. Dawn recently asked me to be the godmother of her second child, her son. My husband is offended that I was asked and he wasn't. He has never made an effort to have a friendship with Dawn and her husband, or even met her son since his birth many months ago. He wants no part in the process, which I am very upset about.

What do I do? Should I ignore my husband's feelings, be a good friend and godmother to Dawn's baby and deal with the aftermath with my husband?

POTENTIAL GODMOTHER IN ARIZONA

DEAR POTENTIAL GODMOTHER: Your husband appears to be not only possessive, but also somewhat self-centered and controlling. It would be interesting to know why he's pouting, since he's not close to your friend nor particularly interested in her baby. Because one spouse is asked to be a godparent does NOT automatically mean the other must be. Some children have only one godparent; others have them in multiples. If you wish to be godmother to Dawn's baby boy, go ahead and do it—and do not feel you have to apologize for it.

DEAR ABBY: I'm worried my 23-year-old son may be in serious financial trouble. He has always made clear that he wants to run a business instead of working at a 9-to-5 job. He has been working hard trying to start a consultation business for the last four or five years, which sometimes works and sometimes does not.

He's dependent on my credit card, which he was only supposed to use for emergencies, but he sometimes uses it for more than that. I pay off the credit card bills and he owes me all the money he has charged on it. He promises to pay it back, and comes up with the weirdest excuses when he can't.

On a number of occasions I have tried to sit him down and get out of him if he's in trouble, but he keeps insisting that he's "working on things and everything will be OK soon." I want to be supportive, but I see the debt rising and number of lies piling higher. I am worried sick about him. Please help.

ANXIOUS MOM IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR MOM: Turn off the spigot. You have been your son's "angel" long enough. A business that cannot support itself is a failure. That your son would abuse your generosity and compound it by lying to you is very sad. The way to stop this cycle is to remove him from your credit card and let the chips fall where they may. If he needs a business partner, it should not be you any longer.

TO MY READERS: Today's the day for the wearing of the green! A very happy St. Patrick's Day to you all.

LOVE, ABBY

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

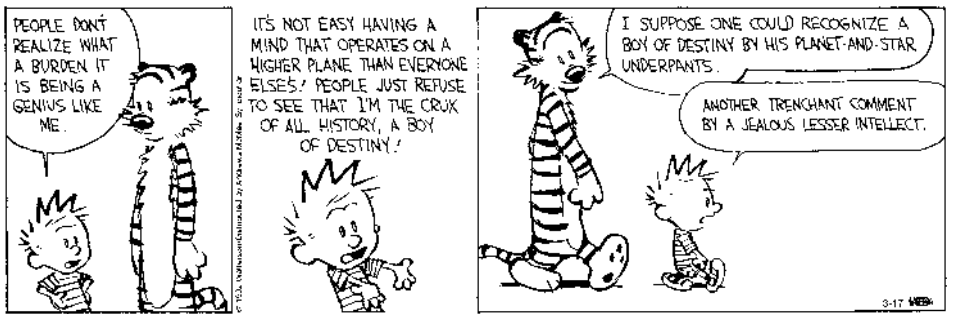
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

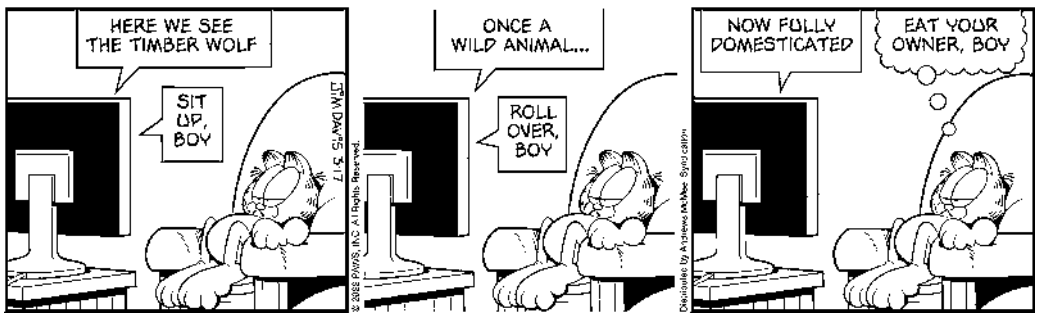
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


PEOPLE DON'T REALIZE WHAT A BURDEN IT IS BEING A GENIUS LIKE ME.
IT'S NOT EASY HAVING A MIND THAT OPERATES ON A HIGHER PLANE THAN EVERYONE ELSE'S! PEOPLE JUST REFUSE TO SEE THAT I'M THE CRUX OF ALL HISTORY, A BOY OF DESTINY!
I SUPPOSE ONE COULD RECOGNIZE A BOY OF DESTINY BY HIS PLANET-AND-STAR UNDERPANTS.
ANOTHER TRENCHANT COMMENT BY A JEALOUS LESSER INTELLECT.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



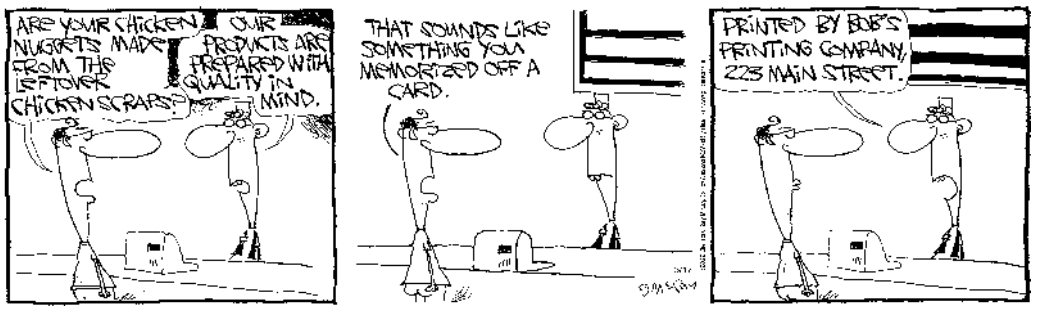
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

OH, HELLO, FANCY.
OKAY. YOU TWO NEED TO BE CIVIL, ALRIGHT?
DO YOU SEE THE ATTITUDE, KATY? DO YOU?
SORRY. SHE'S LIKE THIS UNTIL HER THIRD CUP.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


ARE YOUR CHICKEN NUGGETS MADE FROM THE LEFTOVER CHICKEN SCRAPS?
OUR PRODUCTS ARE PREPARED WITH QUALITY IN MIND.
THAT SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING YOU MEMORIZED OFF A CARD.
PRINTED BY BOB'S PRINTING COMPANY, 223 MAIN STREET.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Jet speed measure
5 Ump's call
9 Saigon soup
12 Body lotion ingredient
13 Kentucky fort
14 Sound of delight
15 Harvard's city
17 Computer acronym
18 — de corps
19 Wagons
21 Harris or Asner
22 Joe of "Good-Fellas"
24 "Close one!"
27 Curator's concern
28 Tosses in
31 100 cts.
32 Red or Black
33 Stickum
34 Rover's pal
36 Hanoi holiday
37 Darned
38 Synthetic fabric
40 "Side-ways" actress Sandra
41 Israeli port
43 Legal expert
47 Central
48 "Kubla Khan" poet
51 Texter's "Wow!"
52 Tackled weeds
53 Tran-scending (Pref.)
54 Away from NNW
55 Singer Braxton
56 Go by

DOWN

1 Nutmeg spice
2 Re-grettably
3 Freebie
4 Semitic language
5 "SNL" segment
6 Moreover
7 Skyline con-cealer
8 Biz bigwigs
9 Three Bears' meal
10 Owl call
11 Resis-tance units
16 Abolish
20 Obama-care acronym
22 Gussy up
23 Coup d'—
24 Adobe file format
25 — polloi
26 "Soul On Ice" author Cleaver
27 Re-garding
29 Part of DJIA
30 Sean, to Yoko
35 Klutz
37 Seafood order
39 Marina boat
40 Sharing word
41 Med. plan options
42 Goals
43 "Star Wars" knight
44 Concept
45 Boot camp VIPs
46 Brewed drinks
49 Tic-tac-toe win
50 Novelist Deighton

Solution time: 24 mins.

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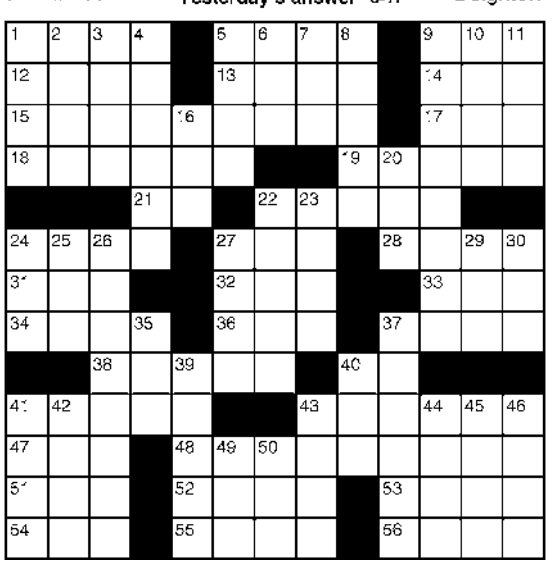
H	Y	P	O		S	A	M		S	A	R	A

Yesterday's answer 3-17



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Mia Hamm, 50; Rob Lowe, 58; Gary Sinise, 67; Kurt Russell, 71.

Happy Birthday: Forge ahead with enthusiasm. Be bold, say what's on your mind and make the changes that will enrich your life. Consider what makes you happy, and practice what you preach. Living life your way will direct you to contentment and give you a new lease on life. Be original, and explore interests with the notion to utilize what you discover to reach your goals. Your numbers are 6, 17, 23, 26, 32, 37, 44.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Take advantage of the changes going on around you. Be observant, stretch your imagination, and find a way to get things done and join forces with like-minded people who are eager to contribute. Advocate for what you want. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Think matters through, and you'll come up with a plan that will help you make the most of your attributes and take advantage of promotions, rebates and opportunities that will help you save and accomplish what you set out to do. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Take the initiative to pursue your goal. Don't waste your time bickering over things you have no control over. Be true to yourself and what you want, and refuse to let anyone interfere with your plans. Personal growth is your path to fulfillment. ✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Improve your surroundings. Whether at work or home, functionality will make a difference in how things turn out. Be methodical, and make changes that ensure you can produce optimum results. Don't let what others do deplete your energy. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Instability will wear you down. Stay focused on finances and medical and legal matters that are pending, not what others think or do. Leave no room for error or situations that allow someone else to take care of responsibilities. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Draw on your intelligence and what you know to be true. Base the changes you make on facts and what you can afford. A partnership will enhance your life if you lay down ground rules to ensure equality prevails. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Put everything in place before you promote and present what you have to offer. Getting along with your peers and those in influential positions will help you gain ground. Personal improvement is favored, and romance will bring you closer to someone special. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Don't let a last-minute change of plans throw you off guard. Listen to what someone offers, and decline if you feel you can do better elsewhere. Be the one who drives your life forward instead of letting someone else pull you along. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Take a pass if someone is pushy or manipulative. Show discipline, and put your energy where it will do you some good. Refuse to let anyone make you feel guilty or that you owe something you don't. Focus on your happiness. ✪✪

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Pay attention to investments, your health, and how you earn and spend your money. Put more into your surroundings to ensure you get the most out of the space you call home. An increase in cash looks promising. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Pay close attention to the people around you. Be empathetic to needs of those you love or work alongside. A happy, positive person is beneficial and will help you excel. Distance yourself from those who cost you financially or emotionally. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Keep things in perspective. Follow the dots to see where each scenario leads. Be aware of the consequences so you can limit mistakes. Focus on what's necessary to save yourself the trouble of backtracking. Share what's essential, not your secrets. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are sympathetic, an advocate and a thinker. You are outspoken and protective.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	4		3		5		7	
1			6		9			4
	7	5		3		1	2	
	2	3		9		6	8	
6			7		1			3
	5		2		3		4	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/17

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

7	2	3	4	8	6	1	9	5
5	9	6	7	1	3	2	4	8
4	1	8	9	2	5	3	7	6
8	5	9	3	6	4	7	1	2
1	3	4	5	7	2	8	6	9
6	7	2	1	9	8	4	5	3
2	4	5	6	3	7	9	8	1
9	8	7	2	5	1	6	3	4
3	6	1	8	4	9	5	2	7

Difficulty Level ★★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

CARGO SHIPS **Solution: 7 letters**

M	L	A	T	E	M	C	S	S	T	O	R	A	G	E
A	A	A	A	C	O	F	F	E	E	R	P	T	D	T
C	I	N	R	E	A	L	I	K	Z	X	U	A	A	I
H	C	S	U	E	G	R	I	S	C	I	O	O	O	U
I	R	S	P	F	N	A	S	F	H	O	S	B	L	R
N	E	U	G	E	A	I	Y	O	T	I	D	A	Ⓐ	F
E	M	L	E	A	E	C	M	O	E	L	N	N	Ⓔ	T
P	M	E	M	T	B	D	T	D	V	A	I	S	Ⓢ	R
R	O	U	T	E	A	R	A	U	C	A	T	T	A	O
E	C	F	A	I	A	R	B	A	R	G	E	E	I	P
I	E	M	R	I	T	T	C	G	S	E	B	A	N	S
R	A	Y	L	E	R	R	A	B	L	U	B	M	O	N
R	N	E	G	A	K	C	A	P	L	N	G	M	R	A
A	R	E	K	N	A	T	E	K	R	A	M	A	I	R
C	O	N	T	A	I	N	E	R	L	E	V	A	R	T

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Bags, Barge, Barrel, Beam, Boat, Boxes, Bulk, Canal, Carrier, Cars, Coffee, Commercial, Container, Crate, Dairy, Dock, Fish, Flour, Food, Fruit, Fuel, Grain, Iron, Lift, Load, Machine, Manufacture, Market, Meat, Metal, Mineral, Ocean, Oil, Package, Pump, Route, Sea, Sizes, Speed, Steam, Steel, Storage, Sugar, Tanker, Timber, Trade, Trailer, Transport, Travel, Voyage

Yesterday's Answer: Above It All

The NEW **Treasury 41** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

Irving scores career-best 60 points, Nets rout Magic, 150-108

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Kyrie Irving made it two nights in a row with a 60-point scorer in the NBA.

A 40-point first half hadn't been seen in almost two decades.

"It just shows you we're on our way to history," Irving said.

Irving scored a career-high 60 points, most in the Nets' NBA history, to lead Brooklyn to a 150-108 victory over the Orlando Magic on Tuesday night.

Irving shot 20 for 31, including 8 of 12 on 3-pointers, in 35 minutes. He made 12 of 13 free throws in matching the highest-scoring game in the NBA this season, done just a night earlier by Minnesota's Karl-Anthony Towns against San Antonio.

"The night after Karl Towns had an incredible performance, and then to have Kyrie do it the next night, the league is in an amazing place right now," teammate Kevin Durant said. "We're seeing a lot of talent displayed every night, and this was one of the elite ones."

Irving and Durant became the first teammates in NBA history to post 50-point performances in consecutive games. Durant scored 53 points in a win against the New York Knicks on Sunday.

Irving scored 41 points in the first half, the most in the first two quarters since Kobe Bryant had 42 against Washington on March 28, 2003.

"It was just about the team really, just getting in the flow," he said. "That's the true purity of this game, doing it efficiently on both ends of the floor and coming out with a W."

The guard left the game after hitting a long 3-pointer with 8:33 remaining and Brooklyn leading 128-94.

Playing in only his 19th game of the season because he isn't eligible to play home games because of New York City's mandate requiring vaccination against COVID-19, Irving reached the 50-point mark by spinning a layup off the glass with 5:02 left in the third quarter.

"A few shots I probably shouldn't have taken. Tough ones, with double-teams and triple-teams coming," he said. "But as long as I can do it with a smile on my face and my teammates weren't too angry with me, it was worthwhile."

It marked the sixth 50-point game of Irving's NBA career and the 16th 50-point game in the league this season, including two apiece by Irving, Durant, LeBron James of the Los Angeles Lakers and Boston's Jayson Tatum.

He went on to pass Deron Williams' Nets record of 57 points.

AP

Brooklyn Nets guard Kyrie Irving (11) drives in front of Orlando Magic guard R.J. Hampton (13) during the first half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, March 15, 2022, in Orlando, Fla.

Irving scored 50 points last Tuesday in a 132-121 win at Charlotte. His previous career high was 57 points for Cleveland at San Antonio on March 3, 2015.

Irving had 16 points and three assists in the Nets' 48-point first quarter, in which they shot 74% (20 for 27) including 5 of 6 on 3s.

"When a guy has a game going like that, there's nothing he can do wrong," said center Andre Drummond. "He was rolling, so it was fun to watch."

The Nets led 86-56 after Irving's 41-point first half. He was 14 for 19.

"There's times he's shooting over two people," said Magic coach Jamahl Mosley. "You try to double-team him, he's smart enough to know when to go and when not to go. He's fast in transition so you can't speed up and try to deny him. They're setting backscreens. He's crafty enough and he's seen every coverage and he knows how to play with a pace. That makes it hard."

Durant added 19 points in the Nets' fourth straight win.

Cole Anthony had 19 points and seven assists for Orlando.

Grizzlies 135, Pacers 102

In Indianapolis, Desmond Bane scored 21 points, Jaren Jackson Jr. had 19 and Memphis rolled without All-Star Ja Morant, beating Indiana.

De'Anthony Melton added 18 points while Morant sat out with back soreness. The Grizzlies made the decision to hold him out after he went through pregame warmups.

It was the fourth consecutive victory for the Grizzlies. The Pacers have lost two in a row and five of their last six games.

Steven Adams had 13 points and 13 rebounds for the Grizzlies.

Jalen Smith scored 15 points for Indiana. Buddy Hield and Terry Taylor each had 14.

Heat 105, Pistons 98

In Miami, Max Strus scored all of his 16 points in the fourth quarter, Tyler Herro finished with a game-high 29 off the bench and Miami escaped with a win over Detroit.

Strus, playing in the second half after Jimmy Butler left the game with a sprained ankle, scored 13 points in a span of 2:55 of the final quarter to help Miami rally. Bam Adebayo finished with 16 for the Heat.

Herro hit the biggest shot of the night for Miami, a 3-pointer for a five-point lead with 1:59 left.

Jerami Grant led the Pistons with 22 points. Isaiah Livers scored 16, while Marvin Bagley III and Saddiq Bey each had 13 for Detroit, which closed the third quarter on a 19-0 run to put a serious scare into the Eastern Conference leaders.

Suns 131, Pelicans 115

In New Orleans, Devin Booker had 27 points and eight assists in 30 minutes before Phoenix coach Monty Williams gave him the rest of the night off, and the Suns beat New Orleans.

Mikal Bridges went 4 of 5 from deep and scored 20 for the Suns, whose accurate shooting and ability to capitalize on virtually every Pelicans mistake helped them secure their fourth victory in five games despite star guard Chris Paul's extended absence with his fractured right thumb.

The Suns shot 53% (18 of 34) from 3-point range and converted 17 Pelicans turnovers into 33 points.

Reserve center JaVale McGee scored 19 and Deandre Ayton added 18 for Phoenix, which shot 55% (49 of 89) overall.

Herb Jones scored 22 for the Pelicans, who've lost five of six as they try to hang on to the final play-in spot in the Western Conference. Guard CJ McCollum returned from a two-game absence while in health and safety protocols and scored 21 points, but also committed five turnovers. Jonas Valanciunas added 17 points and 12 rebounds.

Analysis: As teams get healthier, playoffs come into focus

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

There are just under four weeks remaining in the NBA's regular season, which means only one thing.

The regular season is over.

It's a reality that might make those who fancy themselves as purists cringe, but it's the truth. The point in the NBA calendar where most teams start looking ahead — either to next month or next season — has arrived. A half-dozen or so teams know they're going nowhere. A few others are still trying to secure spots in the play-in tournament. Everybody else is gearing up for the postseason.

Or as Miami guard Kyle Lowry succinctly called it, "the real season."

He's not wrong. The 82-game marathon of a regular season is a compulsory exercise, a prerequisite to quality for what matters most. And the focus is clearly shifting in a lot of places, almost as if training camps for the playoffs are opening.

Some of that is dictated by health. Milwaukee finally has Brook Lopez back, after he missed 67 games — he was there for ring night back in October and hadn't played since — following back surgery. George Hill has been cleared again as well, after a 16-game absence with a neck issue. The defending champions are still very much in the thick of the race to secure the No. 1 seed in the Eastern Conference and Lopez's defense only figures to enhance those chances.

Golden State has Draymond Green available again, after he missed two months with a disc issue. The Warriors went from elite (27-6 with him in the lineup, not counting his 7-second appearance as a tribute during Klay Thompson's return game) to relatively ordinary (19-16) without him. The fact that Green is returning at a point where Thompson is starting to look like himself again is perfect timing for the Warriors, who unbelievably went 33 months without having Green, Thompson and Stephen Curry together for a full game.

Miami could have its full roster together for the first time all season on Tuesday, now that Victor Oladipo is playing again and Markieff Morris has been cleared following his neck problems that led to a four-month hiatus.

Getting guys back is only part of the formula for some teams. Figuring out how the parts fit best together, that's the challenge of this time of year.

"We've got to figure out quickly what combinations make sense," Warriors coach Steve Kerr said. "I think what is becoming apparent to me this year is that we could have a different starting lineup from game to game in the playoffs, from series to series. This is not the Warriors from five years ago when you knew exactly what was coming."

Other teams aren't quite as lucky on the injury front yet.

Cleveland lost All-Star center Jarrett Allen and is now precariously on the line separating those with guaranteed playoff spots from those who will have to get through the play-in round. The Los Angeles Lakers think they're getting Anthony Davis back, but they also know that — despite LeBron James' brilliance that might lead to a 37-year-old winning the scoring title — the best outcome they can hope for when the regular season ends is probably the No. 9 seed in the Western Conference and a play-in appearance.

Phoenix hasn't missed much of a beat without Chris Paul and should have home-court advantage for the entirety of the NBA playoffs clinched before long.

And then there's a couple of massive what-ifs still lingering.

If New York mayor Eric Adams amends his city's vaccine restrictions, the Brooklyn Nets could get Kyrie Irving on the floor all the time instead of half the time. There's also the not-insignificant issue for the Nets surrounding Ben Simmons, and when or if he'll be ready to go for the first time all season — meaning the team that came into the season as prohibitive favorites have no idea when, or if, it will be whole.

"The holy grail is a championship," Nets guard Patty Mills said. "Time isn't on our side."

And the Los Angeles Clippers have hung around in the playoff race, basically with no worse than a play-in spot secure. Imagine what could happen when or if they get Paul George or possibly even Kawhi Leonard back for the postseason. Same goes in Denver, if the Nuggets get Jamal Murray back on the floor following his ACL tear from a year ago.

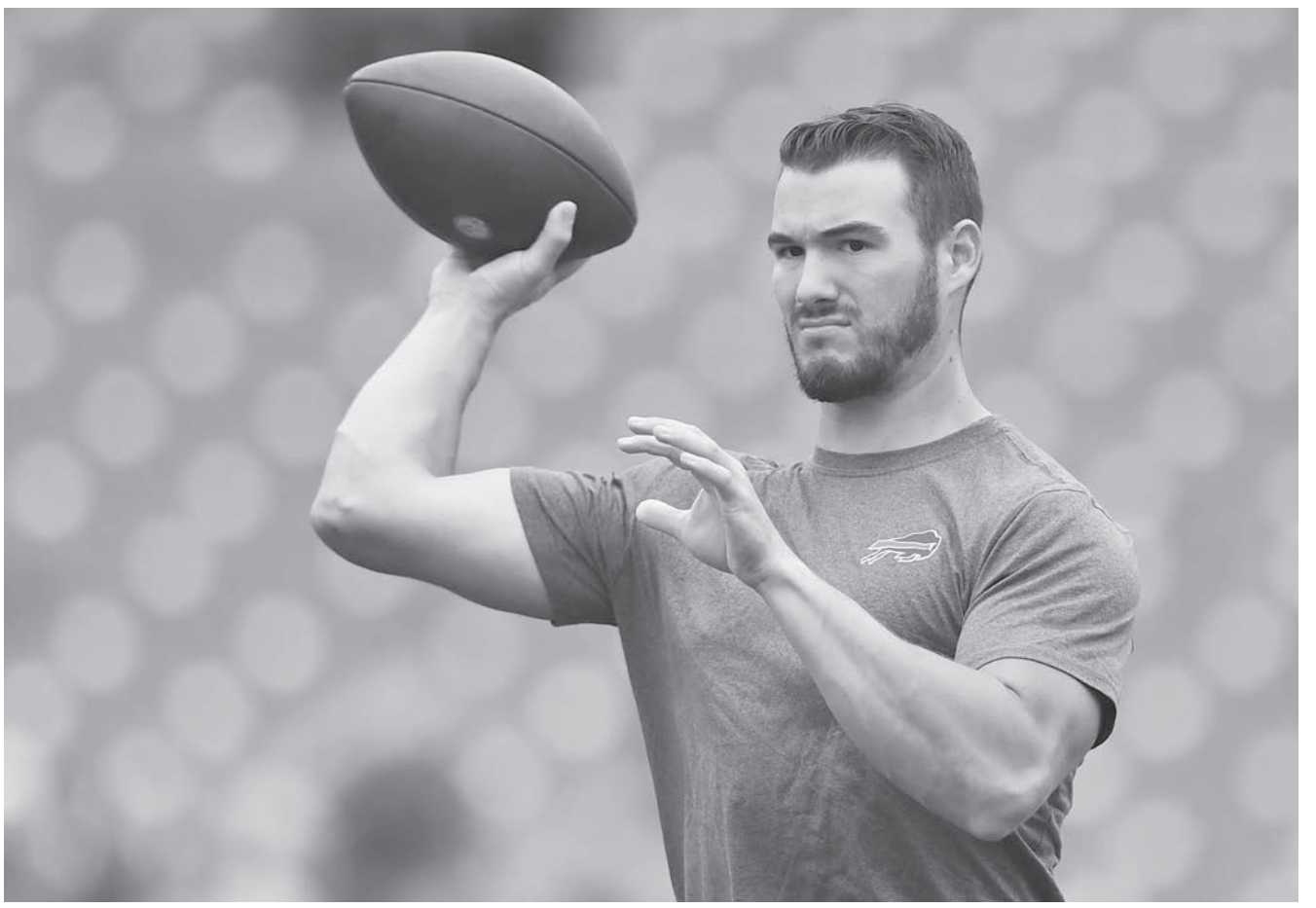
For the teams who think they are contenders — and there are more teams identifying as such than usual this season, it seems — the next four weeks are about figuring it out.

"Just getting prepared for the real season," Lowry said. "I'm just making sure that I'm ready to go when it's time to go, and that my teammates are ready to go when it's time to go."

Yes, the real season is basically here.

NFL free agency: Let the dealing begin, mostly unofficial

By BARRY WILNER
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER



AP

Buffalo Bills quarterback Mitchell Trubisky warms up before an NFL football game against the Houston Texans, Sunday, Oct. 3, 2021, in Orchard Park, N.Y.

Let the dealing begin—if mostly unofficial.

The NFL's "legal tampering period" in free agency began Monday with a slew of deals even as many teams released veterans to clear salary cap space before the league's business year begins Wednesday.

Most aggressive was the worst team in the league. Jacksonville, which has the first overall selection in the draft next month for the second straight year, got busy early.

The Jaguars agreed to sign Arizona receiver Christian Kirk, Washington guard Brandon Scherff, Atlanta linebacker Foyesade Oluokun, New York Jets defensive tackle Folorunso "Foley" Fatukasi, New York Giants tight end Evan Engram and Las Vegas receiver Zay Jones, according to a person familiar with the negotiations.

Also agreeing to move on were New England cornerback J.C. Jackson, Los Angeles Rams defensive tackle Sebastian Joseph-Day and New York Giants defensive tackle Austin Johnson, all to the Los Angeles Chargers; linebacker Haason Reddick from Carolina to Philadelphia; guard Laken Tomlinson from San Francisco to the New York Jets; tight end C.J. Uzomah from Cincinnati to the Jets; running back Chase Edmonds from Arizona to Miami; offensive lineman Ted Karras from New England to Cincinnati and offensive lineman Alex Cappa from Tampa Bay to Cincinnati; offensive lineman Rodger Saffold from Tennessee to Buffalo; quarterback Mitchell Trubisky from Buffalo to Pittsburgh; safety Xavier Woods from Minnesota to Carolina; guard Austin Corbett from the Rams to Carolina; and defensive tackle D.J. Jones from San Francisco to Denver — with many more switches to come.

Staying put are Tampa Bay center Ryan Jensen, a key protector of the no-longer-retired Tom Brady; RB James Conner and QB Colt McCoy with the Cardinals; safeties Devin McCourty with the Patriots and Quandre Diggs with the Seahawks, who also retained tight end Will Dissly; All-Pro kick returner Braxton Berrios with the Jets; defensive end Emmanuel Ogbah with the Dolphins; linebacker Preston Smith with the Packers; center Brian Allen and tackle Joseph Noteboom with the Rams; center Mitch Morse with the Bills; linebacker Alex Anzalone with the Lions; center Ben Jones and tight end Geoff Swaim with the Titans; and offensive tackle Chuks Okorafor with the Steelers.

"We are excited to have Preston continue his career with the Packers," general manger Brian Gutekunst said. "Since coming to Green Bay, he has not only contributed with production on the field but has been a great presence in the locker room and a leader for this team."

Noteboom is nearly certain to be the Rams' starting left tackle because NFL Man of the Year Andrew Whitworth, 40, is expected to retire.

Set free and able to sign with another team even before Wednesday were Browns receiver Jarvis Landry; Packers linebacker Za'Darius Smith and versatile offensive lineman Billy Turner; Bears nose tackle Eddie Goldman; and Panthers cornerback A.J. Bouye and defensive end Morgan Fox.

Yes, 32 teams are in scramble mode, for a variety of reasons. Some desperately need to get under the $208.2 million cap, which is up by nearly $26 million after two pandemic-impacted seasons. The Packers, Saints, Rams, 49ers and Chiefs are among those.

Others are clearing out players with large cap hits to add more spending room or because they plan to bring in replacements. Such is the case in Cleveland with Amari Cooper about to become the No. 1 wideout, so Landry is gone despite the many positives he brought to the Browns.

"Jarvis' on-field production and fiery competitiveness speaks for itself, but his leadership and team-oriented attitude impacted our culture in a way that will last in time even beyond his release," general manager Andrew Berry said. "These decisions are always difficult, but we wish Jarvis well and we look forward to the day when he returns as a storied Browns alumnus."

The biggest scramble, of course, centers on adding players for positions of need. Trubisky in Pittsburgh makes some sense with Ben Roethlisberger retired. Reddick, from the Philly area and a sack force in recent years, should boost a defense in need of exactly what he brings. Miami badly needs a reliable running back and gets one in Edmonds, who would have been a backup to Conner in Arizona.

Jackson should solidify an underperforming cornerbacks group with the Chargers. The 26-year-old earned his first Pro Bowl selection last season, leading the league with 23 passes defensed, and was second with eight interceptions. He has 25 picks over the past four seasons, most in the league.

And then there is Jacksonville, which needs everything.

All six newcomers should be starters. Kirk figures to replace DJ Chark as Trevor Lawrence's top target, while Jones could line up opposite him. Scherff has been a dependable blocker when healthy in Washington. Oluokun led the Falcons with 192 tackles last season, and Fatukasi is a force against the run. Engram is expected to replace James O'Shaughnessy and be the team's top tight end.

Colin Kaepernick still wants to play in NFL, seeks receivers

By ROB MAADDI
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

AP

Free agent quarterback Colin Kaepernick participates in a workout for NFL football scouts and media, Saturday, Nov. 16, 2019, in Riverdale, Ga. In a tweet Sunday, March 13, 2022,

Colin Kaepernick is seeking receivers to catch his passes and a team to sign him.

Kaepernick, who led the San Francisco 49ers to a Super Bowl appearance following the 2012 season, last played in the NFL in 2016, the same year he started kneeling during the national anthem to protest racial injustice.

On Sunday, he wrote on Twitter: "For The past 5 years I've been working out and staying ready in case an opportunity to play presented itself. I'm really grateful to my trainer, who I've been throwing to all this time. But man, do I miss throwing to professional route runners. Who's working?? I will pull up."

Seattle Seahawks wide receiver Tyler Lockett quickly volunteered and Kaepernick responded, saying he'll be there Monday and coordinate with him. It wasn't immediately known where they will get together.

Kaepernick met with Seattle a few years ago, but Seahawks coach Pete Carroll said he should be a starter in the league and the team only wanted a backup for Russell Wilson. Now, Wilson has been traded to Denver.

The Ravens considered signing Kaepernick in the summer of 2017 when former starting quarterback Joe Flacco was dealing with a back injury that would keep him out for the entire preseason. Owner Steve Bisciotti said he consulted with fans and the team ultimately passed.

The NFL organized a workout for Kaepernick in Atlanta in November 2019 but it turned chaotic and resulted in no job offers.

Kaepernick and Reid filed collusion grievances against the league in October 2017, saying they were blacklisted because of protests during the anthem at games. They reached a settlement in 2019.

When Kaepernick took a knee to take a stand against police brutality and racial injustice in 2016, he was mostly alone. Teammate Eric Reid and a few others joined him but politicians, team owners and other players criticized him, fans burned his jersey, and he was booed even at home. By 2020, global opinion shifted to the point that more people began vilifying those who attacked Kaepernick or misrepresented his stance.

Still, he hasn't been offered an opportunity to return to the NFL.

Source: Rizzo agrees to $32M, 2-year deal with Yankees

AP

New York Yankees' Anthony Rizzo watches his two-run single during the second inning of the team's baseball game against the Boston Red Sox on Aug. 18, 2021, in New York.

NEW YORK (AP)—Anthony Rizzo is staying with the New York Yankees, agreeing Tuesday night to a $32 million, two-year contract, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the agreement was subject to a successful physical.

A three-time All-Star first baseman, Rizzo was acquired by the Yankees from the Chicago Cubs on July 29 and added a left-handed bat to a heavily right-handed batting order in New York. He hit .248 with 22 homers, 61 RBIs and a .783 OPS last season, including .249 with eight homers, 21 RBIs and a .768 OPS in 49 games for New York.

Rizzo also provided plate discipline and smooth fielding at first, where he has won a pair of Gold Gloves.

The deal makes it less likely the Yankees will sign former Atlanta All-Star Freddie Freeman. It also creates uncertainty for returning first baseman Luke Voit, the 2020 AL home run champion whose 2021 season was wrecked by injury.

Rizzo said in June that he had not received a coronavirus vaccine, adding "as we continue to get more data, I'll continue to be more educated on it."

Unless New York City changes its requirement, he will need to be vaccinated in order to play at Yankee Stadium. New York City currently mandates that every private sector employee be inoculated against the coronavirus.

Earlier Tuesday, Yankees star Aaron Judge refused to directly answer a question about his vaccination status. Unvaccinated players will also not be allowed to play in Toronto against the division-rival Blue Jays due to Canadian entry laws.

Both Rizzo and outfielder Joey Gallo, a strikeout-prone left-handed hitter, were New York's primary acquisitions at last summer's trade deadline. Before the deals, DJ LeMahieu had been getting significant playing time at first.

Rizzo began his career with San Diego in 2011, then went to the Cubs in 2012. He is a career .268 hitter with 251 home runs and 814 RBIs.

New York general manager Brian Cashman has been busy since the end of the lockout. The Yankees acquired former AL MVP Josh Donaldson, shortstop Isiah

Kiner-Falefa and backup catcher Ben Rortvedt from the Minnesota Twins on Suday for catcher Gary Sánchez and third baseman Gio Urshela.

MLB tests pitch clock, anti-shift, bigger bases in minors

VENICE, Fla. (AP)—Pitchers, catchers and batters will be able to appeal calls from human umpires to "robo umps" in the Low-A Southeast League this season, while pitch clocks, anti-shift rules and larger bases will be tried in the minors ahead of possible big league use in 2023.

MLB announced a slate of rules trials Monday, including updates to the Automated Ball-Strike System (ABS) and a ban on infield shifts, that will expand on several experiments from 2021. Some could be introduced to the majors as soon as 2023. The changes were first reported by Yahoo! Sports.

ABS will be used at Triple-A for the first time, as well as in Low-A Southeast for the second straight year. ABS will call balls and strikes in Triple-A West after May 17 and at Triple-A East games played in Charlotte throughout the season, with an aim to "approximate the strike zone called by high-level umpires."

The Low-A Southeast challenge rule is new. In select games, human umpires will call balls and strikes, and each team will have three appeals that must be made by the pitcher, catcher or batter. Successful challenges will be retained by the team.

The pitch clock is being expanded to all levels after a trial in Low-A West and the Arizona Fall League. Pitchers will have 14 seconds with the bases empty and 19 with runners on at Triple-A, the same timing MLB negotiators mentioned to the players' association. At lower levels, pitchers will get 18 second with men aboard.

Additionally, pitchers will only be allowed two pickoff throws or step-offs per plate appearance. A third pickoff attempt that does not lead to an out will result in automatic advancement for the runners. MLB claims the tandem use of the pitch clock and the pickoff rule shortened games by more than 20 minutes on average last season.

Larger bases are also being adopted at all levels from 15 inches square to 18, which MLB hopes will limit injuries and encourage more action on the basepaths.

The infield shift will be banned at Double-A, High-A and Low-A. Teams will be mandated to have four players on the infield, two on each side of second base.

TINIAN'S

From Page 20

Mendoza have and he's got that. And very few players have that 'It' factor."

Aside from his innate talent for putting the ball through the hoop, Nabors said Dela Cruz also knows when to slow the pace and when to turn the jets on.

"The cerebral part of basketball when everything is moving slow and he's able to read defensive weaknesses and exploit them. Those are just some of the things that separate him from the others in my opinion," he said

OLEAI

From Page 20

to 25 and the event will feature competitions in nine sports: athletics, beach volleyball, badminton, baseball, golf, triathlon, tennis, weightlifting, and *va'a*.

The track facility will host the athletics competition as well as the opening and closing ceremonies, while badminton will be staged at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium and baseball will take place at the "Tan Ko" field. Beach volleyball is slated at Crowne Plaza's sand courts and Jones Beach on Tinian (consolation matches), while weightlifting and *va'a* will be hosted at Marianas High School and the waters off the 13 Fishermen Monument in Beach Road, respectively. Triathlon will be held on Rota, while Coral Ocean Resort will host the golf competition. ***(PR)***

LAKAY

From Page 20

It was Bry Natividad's turn to heat up at the start of the third quarter, stringing 8 points together as Lakay/Islander continued to go to town and entered the fourth and final quarter ahead by a whopping 31 points, 61-30.

It was all over but the shouting as the payoff period ensued, as the only thing left unsettled was the game's final score. Palacios paced five Lakay/Islander players in double figures with 15 markers. The win improved the victors' win-loss mark to 3-2, while the loss was the third in as many games for the not-so Super Tech.

In the third game, 670 Gravity won its second game of the season after edging Vizion Insurance, 77-60.

After leading majority of the first half, 670 Gravity relaxed a bit at the start of the second and allowed Rodel Pastrana to go berserk. With Vizion Insurance's main man firing 11 points, 670 Gravity suddenly found themselves trailing 49-44 entering the last 10 minutes of the contest.

Fortunately, 670 Gravity got timely baskets from Arnold Bernardo and Alfred Tabora in the fourth to rein in Vizion Insurance and escape with the 6-point win.

Joseph Torres led all scores with 26 points for Gravity 670, while Pastrana was not far back with 23 points of his own for Vizion Insurance, which lost for the third time in four tries.

In the second game, Team Marianas routed HBR International, 63-44, in a game where curiously no player finished in double figures. It was the third straight win against no defeat for Team Marianas, while HBR International absorbed its first loss in four games.

First Game

Lakay/Islander 77 – Palacios 15, Natividad 14, Capalad 13, Gant 12, Santos 12, Escano 4, Quan 3, Isip 3, Rabauliman 2.

Super Tech 37 – Ige 12, Tibayan 10, Iguel 7, Santos 4, Agulto 2, Caraig 2.

Scoring by quarters: 19-8, 41-21, 61-30, 77-37.

Second Game

Team Marianas 63 – Dela Cruz 8, Itaas 8, Villarin 7, Santos 7, Castro 7. Satur 6, Aranda 5, Brennan 5, Naraja 3, Deleon Guererro 2, Augenbaugh 2, Diaz 1.

HBR International 44 – Antonio 9, Galang 7, Gotangco 7, Reyes 7, Rotap 6, Hipolito 4, Leon 3, Augusto 2, Moses 1.

Scoring by quarters: 19-12, 30-20, 45-35, 63-44.

Third Game

670 Gravity 66 – Torres 25, Tabora 11, Bernardo 10, Solis 8, Macaraig 5, Camacho 3, Alegre 2, Gaviola 2, Melendez 1.

Vizion Insurance 60 – Pastrana 23, Capuyon 15, Mangali 6, Bungalong 6, Ramos 3, Agustin 2, Regaton 1.

Scoring by quarters: 15-13, 33-27, 44-49, 66-60.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	41	26	.612	—
Boston	41	28	.594	1
Toronto	38	30	.559	3½
Brooklyn	36	33	.522	6
New York	28	40	.412	13½
Southeast Division				
Miami	46	24	.657	—
Atlanta	34	34	.500	11
Charlotte	34	35	.493	11½
Washington	29	38	.433	15½
Orlando	18	52	.257	28
Central Division				
Milwaukee	43	26	.623	—
Chicago	41	27	.603	1½
Cleveland	39	29	.574	3½
Indiana	23	47	.329	20½
Detroit	18	51	.261	25

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	48	22	.686	—
Dallas	42	26	.618	5
New Orleans	28	41	.406	19½
San Antonio	26	43	.377	21½
Houston	17	51	.250	30
Northwest Division				
Utah	42	26	.618	—
Denver	41	28	.594	1½
Minnesota	40	30	.571	3
Portland	26	41	.388	15½
Oklahoma City	20	48	.294	22
Pacific Division				
x-Phoenix	55	14	.797	—
Golden State	47	22	.681	8
L.A. Clippers	36	35	.507	20
L.A. Lakers	29	39	.426	25½
Sacramento	25	45	.357	30½

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Irving scores career-best 60 points, Nets rout Magic, 150-108

PAGE 17

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Source: Rizzo agrees to $32M, 2-year deal with Yankees

PAGE 19

Tinian's knight in shining armor

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

"**Sir**" is a formal honorific address in English usually reserved for knights of the realm that comes from the term "sire" in the Middle Ages.

And for all intents and purposes Sir Dela Cruz has earned that title—even though it's already his birth name—for leading Tinian to back-to-back championships in the 2021-2022 IT&E Interscholastic Boys High School Basketball Championships.

In the do-or-die finals game against top-ranked Saipan Southern High School, the 5'9" combo-guard scored all but 6 of the team's 32 total points. His game-long brilliance led Tinian coach Keith Nabors to proclaim that Dela Cruz might just be the best high school basketball player in the CNMI.

"He definitely balled outta control during the tourney. He showed everyone his skillset and his closer mentality. This is what separates him from other high school ballers in the CNMI. He knows that winning feeling and he did everything in his power to hold on to that and another championship run is what ensued," said Nabors.

Dela Cruz was quick to deflect the accolades his coach bestowed on him though.

"I truly appreciate all his support and how much he believes in not only me, but the rest of his players as well. However, I would not agree that I'm the best player in the CNMI. The reason I play how I play is because of how much I love this game. Every player has their own unique qualities that makes them the player and person they are. We all got our strengths, if we all played the same with no differences between us, basketball would be boring. It's the diversity and variety within all the players that makes the game what it is," he said.

Nabors, however, insists that it wasn't championship hangover that led him to say that his ward is the best high school player in the islands.

"I'm not trying to disrespect any of the other players out there. There is plenty of talent in the CNMI currently but he is in a class all his own."

Simply put, the longtime Tinian coach said Dela Cruz is a generational talent that can be compared to Saipan hoopers that eventually took their talents to the U.S. mainland.

"He's got the tools needed to play at the next level I think. I've seen what the CNMI basketball players who have had success in the mainland like Christian Mizer and Kobee

See TINIAN'S on Page 19

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Tinian's Sir Dela Cruz in action during the recent 2021-2022 IT&E Interscholastic Boys High School Basketball Championships at the Marianas High School Gymnasium in Susupe.

Lakay, Gravity post contrasting wins

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Lakay/Islander and Gravity 670 scored contrasting wins in the bookend open games of the Inaugural SCLC Basketball League last Tuesday night at the Civic Center Basketball Court in Susupe.

In the opener, Lakay/Islander routed Super Tech, 77-37, thanks to a balanced offensive attack from up and down its roster.

Keith Santos and R.J. Palacios allowed Lakay/Islander to take control early as the duo scored 12 combined points to give them a 19-8 lead after the first quarter.

Center Zeric Gant then dominated the smaller Super Tech frontliners in the second quarter, banging 8 points as Lakay/Islander nearly doubled its lead, 41-21, at the halftime break.

See LAKAY on Page 19

MARK RABAGO
Gravity 670's Alfred Tabora drives baseline against Lakay/Islander's D.J. Ong while teammates Sid Quan and Al Solis look on during their open division game earlier this month in the Inaugural SCLC Basketball League at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Center in Gualo Rai.

Oleai track oval, 'Tan Ko' field closed

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Resurfacing work at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field oval has started last Friday to prepare the facility for the 2022 Pacific Mini Games.

The Oleai Sports Complex's track and field oval and the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field are closed to the public to give way to the repair work at the facilities.

Contractors for the project have started mobilizing equipment and clearing the area last Friday so for everyone's safety, the public is not allowed to utilize the oval and the "Tan Ko" baseball field until further notice. Individuals and teams that are using other facilities located at the sports complex are also asked to exercise extra caution as construction and repair works at the OSC are underway.

"We are asking the public's cooperation on this closure announcement, as we work on getting our facilities ready for our athletes and officials as well as visiting teams participating in the 2022 Pacific Mini Games," the Northern Marianas Sports Association said in a press statement.

The NMI will be hosting the Mini Games from June 17

See OLEAI on Page 19